

: The :  
ROMANCE  
OF : IRISH  
history

JOHN : G : ROWE













THE ROMANCE OF IRISH HISTORY.









The Red Hand of Ulster



# The Romance of Irish History

BY

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Author of "In Nelson's Day," "For His Father's Honour,"  
"The Pilgrims of Grace," etc.



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To her  
beyond the  
grave, at whose  
knee I first learned to  
love Ireland, I dedicate  
this book as a  
son's loving  
tribute

“ I loved a love—a royal love—  
In the golden long ago ;  
And she was fair as fair could be,  
The foam upon the broken sea,  
The sheen of sun, or moon or star,  
The sparkle from the diamond spar,  
Not half so rare and radiant are  
As my own love—my royal love—  
In the golden long ago.”

*Edmund Leamy, M.P.*



## PREFACE.

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“The story of our native land, from weary age to age,  
Is writ in blood and scalding tears on many a gloomy page.”

My idea, in compiling this book, was to get away from “the blood and scalding tears” as much as possible, to avoid the horrible and gruesome, those detestable cruelties and inhumanities which have too long made Irish History a nightmare to all, which must fill the minds of even adult readers with sickening horror and bitter resentment, and the recapitulation of which to-day can serve no good purpose, but merely keep alive racial hatreds.

I have sought, on the other hand, to display in the most glowing colours all the romance and glory bound up in the history of a land which, I assert, is perhaps more entitled to be called one of romance than any other on the face of the earth, and that from earliest times up to the present. And my object in doing so is to awaken a deep and true love of our country and her heroic past in the hearts of the rising generation.

If a perusal of this book inspire the student of Irish History to prosecute deeper research, the author will feel that his task—a labour of love on the whole—has not been labour wasted, has not been vain.

JOHN G. ROWE.



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## PART I.

### THE GOLDEN AGE OF ANCIENT ERIN.

Let Erin remember the days of old,  
Ere her faithless sons betrayed her,  
When Malachy wore the collar of gold,  
Which he won from the proud invader,  
When her kings with standards of green unfurled,  
Led the Red Branch knights to danger,  
Ere the emerald gem of the western world  
Was set in the crown of a stranger.

THOMAS MOORE.





# THE ROMANCE OF IRISH HISTORY.

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## CHAPTER I.

THE COMING OF THE MILESIAHS TO "THE ISLE OF DESTINY."—QUEEN MACHA "OF THE GOLDEN HAIR."—KING ECHY "THE SIGHER," AND THE PARTITION OF INNIS-FAIL INTO FIVE KINGDOMS.

Ireland, the land of Eire, called also by the ancients *Inis fail* or the "isle of destiny," can claim, perhaps better than any other country, to have been, from the earliest times, a land of romance.

In the far-back mythical ages, we see it emerging from the mists of the morning of history as "the Promised Isle" of the Milesians, the martial race who came from Spain, though they were not Spaniards. The Milesians were a Scythian people, moving ever westward, "in the track of the setting sun," seeking, according to tradition, an island promised them as the descendants of Gadhele, or *Gadelius*, on account of whom they were also known as Gadheles, or Gaels.

It is said that it was on the 17th of May, 1029 B.C., they thus first sighted Ireland; and what finer picture can a historian, dealing with the romantic side of Irish history, open with than such a scene as this? The Milesians, so called from *Milidh*, or Milesius,

their king, lay off Wexford Harbour in thirty ships. Aboard each ship were thirty warriors, with their wives, children and dependents. Milidh, their patriarch-monarch, was dead, but his wife, the aged Queen-Mother, *Scota*, was there, with her eight stalwart sons.

Possibly the same poetic fancy was in their hearts as John Locke, the gifted Irish poet of the nineteenth century, voiced in his beautiful poem "Dawn on the Irish Coast":—

Oh, *manam le Dia* ! but there it is,  
The dawn on the hills of Ireland !  
God's angels lifting the night's black veil  
From the fair sweet face of my sireland.  
Oh, Ireland, isn't it grand you look,  
Like a bride in her rich adorning ?  
And with all the pent-up love of my heart,  
I bid you the top of the morning.

These Milesian invaders guarded in their midst a Sacred Banner, symbolising to them both their origin and their mission, the promise given to their race,—a flag on which was represented a dead serpent and the rod of Moses, for, so the legend runs, their ancestor, Gadelius, was bitten while a child by a serpent and miraculously cured by Moses in return for the kindness of his countrymen to the persecuted Israelites. Moses, the legend adds, also prophesied or promised that they should inhabit a country "in which no venomous reptile could live, an island they should seek and find in the track of the setting sun."

Now a people called *Danaans*, or the *Tuatha de Danaan*, were in possession of Ireland at the time.



They had defeated and driven the Firbolgs, earlier colonists again, into the west parts. The Danaans are supposed to have been Celts or *Belgae*; the Firbolgs are generally believed to have come from Greece. Preceding the Firbolgs, Ireland is said to have been colonised by the Nemedians, a Scythian people like the Milesians; and before them again by the Partholans, a Grecian race allied to the Firbolgs.

Thomas Moore, in one of his "Melodies," thus describes the coming of the Milesians:

"They came from a land beyond the sea,  
And now o'er the western main,  
Set sail in their good ships, gallantly,  
From the sunny land of Spain.  
'Oh, where's the Isle we've seen in dreams.  
Our destin'd home or grave?'  
Thus sang they as, by the morning's beams,  
They swept the Atlantic wave.

And lo, where afar o'er ocean shines  
A sparkle of radiant green,  
As though in that deep lay emerald mines,  
Whose light through the wave was seen,  
''Tis Innisfail—'tis Innisfail!'  
Rings o'er the echoing sea;  
While, bending to heaven, the warriors hail  
That home of the brave and free.

Then turned they unto the Eastern wave,  
Where now their Day-God's eye  
A look of such sunny omen gave  
As lighted up sea and sky.  
Nor frown was seen through sky or sea,  
Nor tear o'er leaf or sod,  
When first on their Isle of Destiny  
Our great forefathers trod."

Innisfail, the Isle of Destiny, was reached, and the Milesians hastened to effect a landing. But we are told that a great mist forthwith came on, hiding the land, and they attributed this to the incantations of the Danaans, who were supposed to be great necromancers. Then followed a tremendous hurricane, scattering the fleet; so it would seem that even in those early days Irish winds objected to aliens landing on Irish soil.

No less than five of the eight sons of Milidh perished in the storm, together with many lesser chiefs and warriors. However, the survivors landed, some near Drogheda, others in Kerry; and like men who meant business, they promptly burned their ships to destroy all thoughts of retreat or flight. In the fighting that ensued, the Danaans were signally defeated, but with the loss to the Milesians of Scotsa, their aged Queen-Mother, who died as she had lived, a warrior-queen, in a great battle near Tralee. On the Danaan side fell three princes, who were brothers and married to three sisters. The names of these three princesses, Eire, Banba or Banva, and Fiola, are often used to signify Ireland. These three queens fell by each other's hands on hearing of the disastrous result of the battle.

From the name of their great queen, Scotsa, the Milesians were also called Scots. They afterwards colonised Alba (Scotland), subduing the Picts, and hence the name of Scotland.

As A. M. Sullivan in his "Story of Ireland" says, "the queens of ancient Ireland figure prominently in our history." And so, perhaps, Erin is well repre-

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He was a noble-looking man, with dark hair, and when he was led captive before the queen, who had never seen him before, she formed a deep attachment for him. Refusing to put him to death as counselled by her officers, she bade him and his brothers and their retainers build her a palace near Armagh. When they had done so, she named it *Emania*, and took up her residence there, and it was the palace of the Kings of Ulster for six centuries. Its site is marked to-day by the Navan "fort" or "ring," a rath or barrow some twelve acres in extent.

Queen Macha now offered Cimbaeth his liberty and a principedom elsewhere; but he replied that he preferred to remain and be her slave for all time, and, kneeling at her feet, he plainly showed her that her regard was reciprocated. This royal romance had a fitting termination. Macha thereupon offered her willing knight her hand and throne, and they shared the throne of Ireland until death parted them, ruling the country well and bringing great prosperity to it. They founded near Emania "a regal city containing many thousands of inhabitants," viz., Armagh, *i.e.*, Ard-Macha or Macha's height.

We now come to him who has been variously styled "The Irish Achilles," and "The Greatest Champion of the Scottish (*i.e.*, Irish) race," the "incomparable" Cuchullain. He stands forth so prominently in the annals of the Heroic Age of Erin, that the period is often denoted as the Cuchullain cycle, and innumerable have been the books, essays and poems written about him. Needless to say, there is a great deal of legendary, as well as historic, lore connected with him.

The soldier Milesian race lived only for the battle-field, the chase, and the banqueting-hall. Furiously into the serried ranks of the enemy, the Milesian chieftain rushed in his war-chariot, standing erect by the charioteer, driving at top speed, and right and left he wreaked death and havoc with his javelins and spear.

By King Eochy "the Sigher," so called because of his continually lamenting the loss of his sons in a battle at Drumcree, some time before the Cuchullain period, the country had most unfortunately been divided into five parts. Over each of these Eochy appointed a sub-king, styling himself the Ard-Righ, or High-King. These five kingdoms were Ulidia (Ulster), Lagenia (Leinster), Conact (Connaught), Thomond or North Mononia (Munster—Clare more particularly); and Desmond or South Munster.

Eochy gave his daughter Mave or Mab in marriage to the sub-king of Connaught, building her a palace at Cruachan or Rathcroghan. This Queen Mave is another of Ireland's famous warrior-queens. On her husband's death she reigned alone for ten years.

## CHAPTER II.

THE STONE OF DESTINY.—THE LEGEND OF THE RED HAND OF ULSTER.—THE RED BRANCH KNIGHTS AND CUCHULLAIN, THE “IRISH ACHILLES.”—KING CONNOR MACNESSA AND THE BRAIN-BALL.

The Tuatha de Danaans are said to have brought to Ireland the *Lia Fail*, or Stone of Destiny, also called “Jacob’s Stone.” It was a stone fabulously reputed to be that on which Jacob rested his head at Luza. It was used as the coronation stone of the supreme kings of Ireland in these early Druidic days. For some reason, about the beginning of Christianity, it was removed to Scotland. Thenceforward it became the stone on which Scottish Kings were crowned, and was kept for that purpose at Scone in Perthshire.

Until the dawn of Christianity it was believed to have extraordinary virtues, and in Scotland, for long after, the superstition attached to it that “wherever the stone should be found, some one of the race should reign.” Edward I. of England, determined that he and his successors should rule in Scotland, and for that matter, in all Great Britain, in 1300, having temporarily crushed the Scots, carried off this stone



to Westminster, where it still remains, inclosed in the coronation chair of the Kings of England.

Although the Milesians recognised one supreme king, they were split up into clans, and the clans again into septs, or smaller sections, the natural outcome of the family instinct, and a condition to be found among all primitive peoples. That the clan system was not earlier broken up is generally supposed to have been the cause of a great deal of the misfortunes of both Ireland and Scotland. But this is somewhat of a moot point. Certainly it resulted in endless petty jealousies and bitter feuds, fatal disunion and treachery, even in the face of the common enemy. So, too, did the partition of Innisfail into five kingdoms.

A romantic legend, handed down to us of the first of the great clan O'Neill, accounts for the famous armorial bearing of the Red Hand of Ulster. When the Milesian chiefs were exploring and dividing among themselves the subjugated "Isle of Destiny," "in order to quicken the emulation between the captains, the leader proclaimed," as they approached the shores of Ulster, "Whosoever shall first touch the land yonder, to him shall all the adjacent land be given." It is also alleged that the king promised his daughter's hand as a further inducement, a very likely thing in those days. Then did the young Chief of the House of Nial or Neill, who loved the maiden and saw a rival's boat passing his in the race, sever at one blow with his trusty sword or axe his right hand at the wrist. He caught the bleeding member as it fell on the deck, and, with all the power of his strong left arm, flung it

ashore, on to the beach, ahead of the straining prow of his rival. He had touched the land first, and Ulster became his patrimony and the royal maid his wife.

The "Sunburst" was the national flag of the Irish after the coming of the Milesians, possibly adopted by them in commemoration of the first dawn they saw shining upon their Isle of Destiny, and the Bloody or Red Hand became the cognizance of the royal house of Ulidia or Ulster.

We have come to the period immediately preceding the time of our Saviour, that known in Ireland, on account of its great champion, as already stated, as the Cuchullain era. Connor MacNessa was king of Ulidia or Ulster, and Eochy the Tenth was High-King at Tara. MacNessa meant son of Nessa, Nessa being Connor's mother not his father. She was from all accounts, a scheming woman who contrived to persuade her second husband the rightful king, Fergus MacRoigh, to give up his throne to her son, on condition that she married him. Connor, however, was one of the best kings that ever ruled in Ireland, and may be likened in every way to King Arthur of British fame.

He founded an order of knighthood that may be compared to that of King Arthur's Round Table. This was the famous order of the Knights of the Red Branch. Most children, on first hearing of the Red Branch knights of these early days of Ireland—

" When her kings, with standards of green unfurled,  
Led the Red Branch knights to danger,"—

imagine that they were so called because they wore red plumes like branches or boughs of trees in

their helmets. Not so, however. The word "red" in this case meant "royal," the "Royal Branch," for the most distinguished members of the order were descended from the founder of the clan Roe, Roe or Ruagh, meaning simply Red.

The most famous of these Red Branch knights were, first and foremost the hero, Cuchullain; then Laeg MacRian (his charioteer), Conall Cearnach, Eoghan or Eugene MacDurtacht, Cormac Colingas, Laeghaire Buadach, Celtchar MacUithir, and the three sons of Usna—Naisi, Anli and Ardan.

King Connor lodged his gallant champions in one of three great palaces that formed his court at Emania. These three palaces were, first, his own, or the Royal Dun or Residence; then the "Speckled Court," and the "Red Branch." The "Speckled Court" was so called from the varied colour of the arms of the warriors stored therein. Some authorities, however allege that the designation "Red Branch" was assumed from the heads and other gory memorials of their enemies that were kept in their palace, styled *Craobh Derg*, or Red Court.

We are told that King Connor's own private palace contained 150 rooms, and was constructed of red yew wood and bordered with copper, his own apartment having its walls faced with bronze and silver, with birds on these metals, their heads set with shining carbuncles. Thirty warriors might have dined together in the royal chamber.

The name *Cuchullain* was only a *sobriquet*. The warrior's birth-name was Setanta. He was King Connor's sister's son, and born on the rath of Dun Dealgan,



or, as it is known to-day, Castletown Mount, outside Dundalk (the anglicised form of Dundéalgan. Dealgan was a Firbolg chief). It was here that Edward Bruce was crowned King of Ireland in A.D. 1316. Our hero is often referred to as Cuchullain of Muirtheimhne, which was his patrimony, and comprised the county of Louth. From his earliest childhood Setanta, or Cuchullain, displayed a love of arms and warlike amusements. While yet a boy he ran away from his home and made his way to Emania, alone and unattended. He fell foul of a group of boys outside the royal palace, and, proclaiming his identity, was laughed to scorn, whereupon he dashed among the scoffers, knocking them down right and left.

“And the war-steeds of the Ultonians (Ulidians) neighed loudly in their stables, and from the armoury of the Red Branch rose a clangour of brass. . . . the singing of swords, long silent, and the brazen thunder of the revolution of wheels.” The royal shield hanging on the wall, so the story goes, gave forth its usual moaning sound whenever its owner was in danger, whence it was known as “Ocean,” and another shield, known as “the Gate of Battle,” belonging to the champion Celtchar MacUithir, boomed forth. Out rushed all within the three mansions; and the druids foretold “that a warrior had arisen greater than had yet been seen in Erin.”

Meanwhile, a boy named Laeg MacRian, son of the petty king or chief of Gavra, had taken Setanta's part, and helped him against the others. The two lads became fast friends, and Laeg afterwards was the hero's charioteer and life-long companion. The boys Setanta

had fallen foul of belonged to the military school of the Red Branch knights, founded by King Connor. Setanta was now received into the school and became the *protégé* of King Connor.

One day, shortly after, the King and his retinue were visiting at the dun or mansion of the great armourer of the Ultonians, Chullain or Cullen by name. He lived on the summit or slope of Slieve Gullion, which was named after him. "There was never in Erin a better smith than he." "It was he who made the armour and the shields, the swords and spears and war-chariots of the Ultonian or Ulidian warriors." In the night when all in the dun or mansion had retired, after the banquet to which Chullain had entertained them Setanta, who had been left behind, arrived, and was attacked by the great ban-dog which guarded the premises. Setanta killed the dog, and Chullain was so distressed over its loss that the young champion elected to perform the services of a watchdog for him in reparation.

Thenceforward he was no longer known by the name of Setanta, but by the *sobriquet* of Cu Chullain or Chullain's Hound.

Cuchullain was now formally initiated into the great "Red Branch" order of knighthood; and we see him next in his war-chariot, driven by his friend Laeg and drawn by his two renowned steeds, "Liath Macha" and "Black Shanglan," rushing to do battle against the three sons of Nectain, sworn foes of the Ultonians. He killed them one after the other in single combat.

Our hero fell in love with the beautiful and accomplished lady Eimer, daughter of Feargal, a nobleman

residing at Lusk in County Dublin. The lady's father objected to the match, in accordance with the unwritten canon of true romance. He proceeded to Emania, and strategically aroused the curiosity of certain of the Red Branch knights, and particularly Cuchullain, to see the great military academy of Donal at Scatha or Skye, one of the Scottish isles. Cuchullain went to Scatha, but before doing so had "a secret interview with his lady-love, and they pledged mutual troth and constancy." In Scatha he made the acquaintance of a young warrior and fellow-pupil, Ferdia, a Firbolg hailing from Connaught, which province indeed the Firbolgs held possession of for more than a thousand years.

On his return home, Feargal refused to let him see Eimer, and kept her close prisoner. Our hero induced her to elope with him. He was hotly pursued, and had to turn his chariot at every ford from Lusk to Muirtheimhne to give battle. But he and the fair Eimer, and her maid and Laeg eventually reached his own castle of Dun Dealgan safely.

His next exploit forms the subject of the great epic of ancient Irish literature. This is the historic *Tain Bo Chuailgne* or "Cattle Raid of Cooley." Cooley is the great promontory or tongue of land lying between Dundalk and Newry. It was part of Cuchullain's patrimony.

Queen Mave, of Connaught, the daughter of Eochy the Sigher, had married King Connor MacNessa of Ulster; but they had not got on well together and had separated, with bitter mutual recriminations. Connor was her first husband; then, as we have



seen, she was espoused to the sub-king of Connaught, and now, on his death, she married a Leinster Prince named Ailill, by whom she had many sons and one daughter, Findabar or "the Fairbrowed."

Mave and her husband had a dispute as to a bull, a fine animal known as "the White-horned." Ailill would have it that there was not its equal in the land, and Mave said there was. He challenged her to find one, and she took up the challenge, consulting her messengers or couriers to tell her of one. MacRath, her chief courier, said there was a finer bull in the cantred of Cooley in Ulster, and its name was *Don Chuailgne*, or Brown Bull. One named Dare owned the bull, and he refused Queen Mave's offer to buy it. The warrior queen determined to take it by force, and she raised an army and invaded Ulster.

The Ulster chiefs were, at the time, all laid prostrate with a periodical debility, said to be the result of a curse pronounced upon them. Cuchullain, the fable says, was free of the curse. Alone he hung "upon the invaders' flank, a fiery scourge," and finally he challenged all their leading champions to meet him in single combat. Then ensued the famous "Fight at the Ford," of Ardee, long celebrated by the bards. Cuchullain in succession fought ninety Connaught heroes, one a day, laying them all low. The ninety-first to face him was his former friend and fellow-pupil in the Isle of Scatha, Ferdia.

Cuchullain at first refused to fight with him, but at length was forced to do so. After three days' fighting Ferdia was killed. Ferdia fought for love of

Findabar, the Fairbrowed, whose hand Queen Mave had promised him.

The Queen now ended the battle of single combat, marched on, ravaged Ulster, up to the gates of Emania, swept Cooley, seized the Brown Bull, and returned homeward triumphant. But the Red Branch knights recovered from their prostration, and, pursuing the retreating army, "impeded with the spoils of war," overtook it and defeated it in a great battle at Clara in County Westmeath. King Connor MacNessa then led a punitive expedition against the Leinster septs for having aided Queen Mave; and, at the famous battle of Rosnaree, Cuchullain, by a valorous charge in his war-chariot, turned "rout into victory."

Smarting under defeat, Queen Mave again raised a mighty army and invaded Ulster, taking advantage of the absence of King Connor and the Red Branch knights in another part of the kingdom. Emania was taken and given to the flames, and Connor's palace and the Court of the Red Branch were likewise "gutted with fire." With vengeance in their hearts, the champions of Uladh hurried back. Down upon the serried ranks of the foe thundered the Red Branch knights, each erect in his flying chariot, with spear poised and broad shield covering his breast; and foremost in the battle-front as ever raced Cuchullain, "the Hound of Uladh, lord of war."

"Splendid o'er the plain he speeds,  
. . . "Louder whirr his whirling wheels."

With Laeg, his faithful charioteer and friend, guiding and lashing the two horses, the fabled "Liath Macha" and "Black Shanglan," to faster and faster speed—

“Never hoofs like them shall ring,  
Rapid as the winds of spring”—

he ploughed lanes, “deep and broad,” through the reeling ranks of the foe, strewing the plain wherever he turned with dead and dying.

But lo! the chariot of Lugaidh MacCuroi, King of Munster, swept up, not to meet him, but to take him in the rear. A poisoned javelin flew from MacCuroi’s practised hand, and pierced the champion through the chest, as he turned too late to defend himself. Transfixed, he fell and rolled out of the chariot. Unbeaten still, though dying, he dragged himself to a tall pillar-stone near by, marking the grave of a warrior slain in some previous war. Holding to it, he got upon his feet, determined to die standing, as became the Champion of Uladh. He bound himself to the stone with his mantle, which he tore in two and passed about him like a sash, and thus he died. “Thus they beheld him, standing with the drawn sword in his hand and the rays of the setting sun bright on his panic-striking helmet.”

His “Leaning Stone” still stands at Ratheddy, near Knockbridge, outside Dundalk. It has a vertical crack, and the strata of the stone on the one side of this run at right angles to those of the other, curiously enough.

Laeg MacRian, his charioteer and friend, fell with him on that fatal field, being stricken down immediately afterwards, hampered, as he was with the horses, by a second unerring javelin from the same hand. But promptly their deaths were avenged. Another Red Branch hero, Conall Cearnach, tore up



mad with rage at the death of his beloved Chief, and straightway spitted the Munster monarch on his lance.

"Home they bore her warrior dead"—the mourning knights of the Red Branch,—and Eimer, his fond spouse, on seeing the dead body of her lord, threw herself down beside it, and there and then died of grief.

Such is the story of Cuchullain, and there can be no doubt that it is founded on a good deal of truth, and so is entitled to a place in a work that claims to be "the Romance of Irish History."

There is one allegation against Connor MacNessa's honour. Moore has dealt with it in his "Lament for the Children of Usna." The story goes that Deirdre was a lovely maiden, beloved by Connor, but she eloped with a young noble named Naisi, a son of Usna. To be revenged, Connor invited Naisi and his two brothers to return to Emania from their retreat in Alba (Scotland), and he then slaughtered them and their attendants. A dreadful civil war followed, which nearly resulted in Connor's destruction.

But doubts have been cast upon the story of his treachery, for in all other respects he proved himself a brave and noble man; and most fitting was the end which, according to tradition, befel him. The pagan Irish sometimes took the brains of their slain foes, mixed them up with lime, and, rolling them into balls, let these harden, and kept them as trophies. Once in a way they used them as missiles from slings. With one of these brain-balls King Connor was wounded in a battle. His physician warned him that to remove it from his head, in which it was

“buried two-thirds of its depth,” would mean his instant death, but said that if it were left where it was he might live many years, provided always that he did not over-excite himself. Years passed, when news reached him, 'tis said, of the true God having been crucified. Heathen though he was, King Connor's generous heart was touched.

“He rushed to the woods, striking wildly at boughs  
that dropped down with each blow,  
And he cried: ‘Were I 'midst the vile rabble, I'd  
cleave them to earth even so,  
With the strokes of a high king of Erin, the whirls  
of my keen-tempered sword,  
I would save from their horrible fury that mild and  
that merciful Lord.’  
His frame shook and heaved with emotion; the  
brain-ball leaped forth from his head,  
And, commending his soul to that Saviour, King  
Connor MacNessa fell dead.”

## CHAPTER III.

MORAN "THE JUST."—THE BORU TRIBUTE—CON OF THE HUNDRED BATTLES.—FINN MACCOOL AND THE ANCIENT FENIANS.—NIAL OF THE NINE HOSTAGES AND HIS SUBJUGATION OF SCOTLAND, BRITAIN AND GAUL.

Far as the Roman soldier penetrated, he never set foot on Irish soil, and this fact is often thought to have been a calamity rather than an advantage. Had the Romans subjugated Ireland as they did Britain, they would have consolidated the Kingdom and destroyed the bad effect of the clan system. Britain, however, did not benefit very much by Roman rule, and was left in a parlous condition at the time of the Anglo-Saxon invasion.

The Romans, however, were acquainted with the inhabitants of Erin, and Irish soldiers fought the conquerors of the world on the continent. Ireland was known to the Romans by various names: Ierne, Juverna, Hibernia and Scotia.

The Firbolgs and other subject races, classed under the generic name of Attacotti by Latin historians, conspired after the reign of Connor MacNessa to rid themselves of their Milesian taskmasters. It was a most carefully planned massacre. All the royal and



noble families of the dominant race were invited to a great meeting for games and athletic exercises on the plain of Knock Ma, in the county of Galway, and at the end of nine days they were suddenly set upon by a great body of conspirators, and slaughtered to a man.

Three princesses of the royal line escaped to Alba or Scotland, and there each bore a posthumous son. Cairbre or Carbry, a Firbolg chief, was placed upon the throne, but during the five years of his reign the country is said to have been visited with all manner of evil: corn only bore one grain to the stalk, the cattle gave no milk, the fruit trees were blighted and the rivers dried up. Carbry died, and his son Moran, surnamed "the Just," refused to accept the crown that had been won by such treachery and cold-blooded slaughter, and demanded that one of the three young Milesian princes be made ruler instead. The people complied with his wish. The three princes of the blood were sent for, returned, and one of them was put upon the throne, while Moran, the Just, was made the chief judge of the land; and never was the nation so happy as under this new administration. The legend goes that Moran's chain of office, bequeathed through the succeeding centuries, "would tighten around the neck of the judge if he were unjustly judging a cause."

King Tuathal now made Meath into a mensal province for the special support of the High King. He formed the new province of equal proportions of each of the other four provinces. The King of Leinster having tricked him, Tuathal imposed on that province

the famous Boru or Borumha tribute. This meant "cow-tribute," and Leinster had to pay yearly 150 cows, and a like number of pigs, pieces of cloth, married slaves and slave girls. Needless to say, such an exaction, levied remorselessly through succeeding reigns, led to terrific and endless civil war and sowed the country with blood. It was not abolished until centuries had gone by.

Con of the Hundred Battles, though his name has come down to us as a great hero, possibly on account of a mistaken idea that he was a splendid warrior, seems to have been a most unsuccessful fighter, and by no means worthy of his fame. The sub-king of Leinster, Eoghan or *Mogh Nuadat*, the son of the King of Munster—a prince of the royal line of Heber—proved himself a far finer soldier, defeating him in ten successive battles. Con had to submit to the humiliation of surrendering half his kingdom to Eoghan or Owen. The two monarchs agreed to divide Ireland equally between them, the dividing line being a chain of sand hills extending from Dublin to Galway Bay, by Clonmacnoise and Clonard, and called the *Eiscir Riada*, or Raised Chariot Drive. Con had the northern half and Eoghan the southern, and the two nations were respectively known as Leith Chuinn or Leh-Conn, and Leh Mogha, Mogha being Eoghan's *sobriquet* or other name. Eoghan, however, went to war again with Con, who this time defeated and slew him outside Tullamore.

One thing alone would seem to entitle Con of the Hundred Battles to the fame he possesses, and that is his apparent founding of the *Fiana Eiron*, or Fenians,

a militia or standing army. It numbered some 9,000 men under its great leader Finn MacCumhal or Finn MacCool, whose fame rivals that of Cuchullain and has been as widely sung by poets and bards. The latter-day word "Fenian," used to signify the revolutionaries of 1865-67, was taken from this historic legion.

Much that is apocryphal, of course, has been handed down to us about the Fiana or Feni, but there can be no doubt that the body existed, the same as did the Red Branch order of knighthood at an earlier period, and their famous leader, Finn MacCool, was a real personage, and a warrior of deserved renown. The members of the legion were probably not ordinary soldiers, but men of noble birth, and superior education, maintained by Con and his successors in order to guard the territory and uphold the authority of the High King. They were, in other words, his bodyguard or Household Guards.

From May to All Hallows they supported themselves by hunting, though at all times holding themselves in readiness to perform whatever duty the Ard-Righ or High King called upon them to do, such as putting down public enemies, exacting tributes, guarding the harbours and coasts from foreign invasion, upholding justice, defending frontiers, etc. During the rest of the year they were quartered on the people. They received a certain fixed pay and were divided into three cohorts or "caths," each consisting of three thousand men. Each "Cath" or "battle" was divided into tens and multiples of ten under officers of lesser or superior degree, as the case might be. It



is popularly supposed that they took their name from Finn, but he was not their first leader. This was Finn's father, who more probably named his son after the legion.

Certain codes of honour were laid down for them, much the same as King Arthur might have imposed upon his Knights of the Round Table. No single warrior might fly before less than ten foemen; no Fenian might offer violence or insult to a woman, or receive a dowry with his wife, but choose her for herself alone. A Fenian, too, might not "refuse to part with anything he might possess."

The Order kept the native wolfdog for hunting purposes, that noble animal which is one of the national emblems of Erin. It is said that "their enormous dogs . . . when conveyed to Rome, frightened the Romans. These dogs were really very gentle and affectionate, though every one of them could pull down a red deer or the fierce wild bull."

Some authorities assert that the Feni or Fians had existed in Ireland long before the time of Con and Finn, that each province had its own separate body, and that these different legions were continually warring against one another.

Goll "the One-Eyed," son of Morna, or MacMorna, for instance, is said to have commanded the Connaught Fenians, and to have slain Finn's father, Cumhal or Cool, in a battle at Castleknock. Cumhal was fighting *against* High-King Con then for Eoghan, the southern High-King. By the subsequent battle at Tullamore, Con the Hundred Fighter recovered sway over all Ireland. Goll MacMorna, ac-

according to tradition, now became Captain-General of the Fiana.

Con perished, in the 35th year of his reign, at the treacherous hands of Tibraitt Tireach, the King of Ulster's grandson. Cormac MacArt or the son of Art, Con's grandson, succeeding his father, is said to have invaded Scotland and reduced it to submission. He revised the laws and ordered the ollamhs to correct the *Psalter of Tara*. This book has not come down to us through the centuries, unhappily.

King Cormac bestowed the command of the Feni upon Finn, out of respect for his father's cool courage and talents, not apparently because of any personal prowess on Finn's own part. From all veracious accounts Finn appears to have excelled "in wisdom and subtlety," but to have been of no great size or strength of body. The flag of the Feni was the Gal Greine, or Sun Burst, and the Order wore their hair long and curling, and saffron-coloured tunic and trews.

Finn's son, Ossian, achieved undying celebrity as a poet as well as a warrior; and it is his songs that have transmitted the exploits of his father Finn and the Feni to posterity. Ossian "is the great central figure in the literature of ancient Erin" (D'Alton). "Truly," says Standish O'Grady, "a great race were these Fians, and their glory will never die."

Other Fians of note were Oscar (Finn's grandson), Caelta MacRonan, Diarmid, Ligan the "Swift of Foot," Goll MacMorna, Fergus "The Eloquent," bard and poet, and Conan the boaster and coward, surnamed the Bald.

The Fians undoubtedly helped Cormac to conquer Scotland, and on this occasion their strength was

raised to seven Caths or 21,000 men. Whether they were ever called upon to repel foreign invasion is doubtful, but, according to a legend, Finn's greatest exploit was in defending Ventry Harbour against the "Emperor of the Whole World," possibly the Romans.

Finn kept almost royal state in his two *duns* or moated palaces, at Moyally in King's County and the Hill of Allen, County Kildare. In Finn's old age, King Cormac bestowed the hand of one of the royal princesses, the Lady Grainne or Grania upon him, but Diarmid, one of Finn's young officers, was beloved by the lady, who thereupon at the marriage-feast drugged all the Feni except her lover, and then eloped with him. Finn was very much enraged, but was appeased by being given another of the King's daughters, Alvie.

The "Four Masters" give the date of Finn's death as "Age of Christ, 283," and he is said to have been killed by a treacherous fisherman, who was beheaded for the crime by the warrior-bard Caelta MacRonan, for "all the Fians loved him (Finn) like a father."

Cormac's son, Carbry, disbanded the Feni because of some alleged treachery. They thereupon went over in a body to the King of Munster, who invaded Meath. At a decisive battle at Gavra (Gowra), near Tara, Oscar, Finn's grandson and the chief of the Feni, was among the slain, and King Carbry, badly wounded, perished the same evening by the hand of an assassin. With Oscar, the Feni appear to have been practically wiped out at Gavra, and we hear of them no more. It is alleged that, as they were never called upon to repel foreign invasion, their chief *raison d'être*,



"they became restive, insolent and rebellious," and so induced the High-King Carbry's action towards them. The Hill of Howth, outside Dublin, is said to have been where the Feni resorted annually for military exercises, and the aspirant for admission into the Order or legion had here to pass some very exacting tests.

He had to be able to ward off with a shield the blunted javelins of nine warriors pitted against him. If he were touched by even one of the spears he was disqualified. Then, given something of a start, he had to not be overtaken by some of the swiftest runners of the legion. Moreover, he had to pass an examination in literature and poetry, though what such acquirements had to do with the making of a soldier is a question, unless they were imposed so as to keep the legion select and confined to men of superior education, even in those days when kings and nobles did not excel very much in that direction.

Other accounts of Finn represent him as pursuing Diarmid and Grainne with relentless and diabolical hate, as acting most treacherously in many instances, and as having been present, in the background, like a modern general—out of the way of all harm—at the disastrous battle of Gavra; then wandering over the corpse-strewn field afterwards and finding the dying Oscar, finally dying himself a lonely death, with Caelta MacRonan by his bedside, comforting his last moments.

Whichever may be the true accounts, we prefer that in which Finn forms the nobler figure and consider it the more likely to be correct, because of his fame

handed down to us through all these centuries and which would never have so rung down through the annals of time had it been ignobly won.

In an old poem entitled "The Rage of Ossian" (Buille Oisin), "in the halls of Finn" at Allen, there are said to have been seen "at each banquet . . . a thousand costly cups or goblets with rims of pure gold." Without the main building were twelve others housing all the warriors of the legion and "in each princely habitation twelve fires constant flamed," and round each fire sat a hundred warriors of the Fiana.

Ireland may now be said to have reached the zenith of her military power and prestige. The High-King Crimthan carried her arms, not only into Scotland but into England, and levied tribute from the inhabitants of both these nations. His successor, Nial, surnamed "of the Nine Hostages," did the same and also invaded Armorica (Brittany). Rome at this time was on her last legs, tottering to her fall, as D'Alton says, and King Nial, joining forces with the Picts of Scotland, "made Britain his tributary province."

The Roman legions had to be recalled, by the historic "Groans of the Britons," to expel him. He would not have had to recoil even before the trained and disciplined troops of Rome, only the Attacotti or Firbolgs in his ranks, ever waiting their opportunity to strike against their masters, turned traitors and went over in a body to the Romans.

Nial obtained his surname "Of the Nine Hostages" from the number of hostages he took from the several provinces he subdued. Into the heart and fairest regions of Gaul (France) did King Nial penetrate with

his all-conquering legions, opposing and defeating the Roman soldiers as well as the Gauls themselves.

The warrior-king, the all-conquering Nial, perished rather ingloriously, after a reign of twenty-seven years, being assassinated on the banks of the Loire in France by one Eochy, the son of the King of Leinster, whom he had banished into exile. He was succeeded by his nephew Dathi, who continued his conquests in Gaul or France, and was killed by lightning while leading his army through the Alps, in the year of our Lord 426, after another glorious reign of twenty-three years.



## CHAPTER IV.

## THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY BY ST. PATRICK.

St. Patrick is said to have been a boy of sixteen when he was captured by King Nial's warrior-bands. Where he was born is uncertain, but some authorities say that his father was a Roman magistrate near Boulogne in Armoric Gaul, or Brittany, and named Calpurnius. His mother's name was Conchessa, and she is supposed to have been a sister of St. Martin, Bishop of Tours.

At this time Christianity had spread pretty well all over the continent and had crushed out Druidism in Britain or Albion. Some writers assert that Kirkpatrick, a few miles from Dumbarton, in Scotland, was St. Patrick's native place. Anyway, St. Patrick or Patricius was brought to Ireland, one of thousands of other poor captives, and sold as a slave to a sub-chief named Milcho, who had his residence near Ballymena, in County Antrim.

Patricius or Patrick tended cattle and pigs for his master on the slopes of Mount Slievemish, and dragged out a most miserable existence thus—for his owner was not of the kindest disposition—for six long years, wearing the humblest garb and eating of the coarsest food. Incessantly, though, he



St. Columkille

St. Patrick

St. Brendan





prayed to God for deliverance as well as fortitude in his trials; and, about 395, he contrived to escape to the coast and obtain a free passage on a vessel lying at anchor there. The legend goes that he was visited by an angel in his sleep, who told him where to find gold to purchase his freedom from Milcho, and also instructed him to make for a port two hundred miles distant, where he would find a ship awaiting him. We can take this story for what it is worth, but certainly it would seem most likely that he did buy his freedom somehow, as otherwise one would imagine that Milcho could have claimed him as an escaped slave, on his later re-appearance in the country.

Reaching Tours, Patrick entered a monastic school and studied for the priesthood, first under St. Martin, and later under St. Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre. In 431 he was sent to Rome, recommended to Pope Celestine I. by St. Germanus, and the following year, being, it is said, about forty-five years of age, he was consecrated bishop. Ever since his advancement to the priesthood he had cherished the grand idea of carrying the faith of Christ into that land where he had lived as a slave, and Pope Celestine, approached by him on the matter, readily commissioned him to proceed to Ireland as its Apostle.\*

Accordingly in that same year, 432, St. Patrick and some twenty companions set sail for Ireland

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\* Some authorities assert that St. Patrick did not receive a commission from Pope Celestine, and it is now impossible to reconcile the contending statements as regards the saint's early life.

and landed in Wicklow, near Bray, at a place subsequently called Kilmantan, after one of his priests. The natives resented his landing and he was obliged to re-embark, when he sailed northward in the hope of getting a hearing from his old master, Milcho.

But Milcho, too, would not listen to him. However, he went on to Downpatrick, and thence to Lecale or Magh-Innis in Strangford Lough, where the chief, Dichu, on hearing he had come on an errand of peace and not war or spoil, invited him to his dun or moated palace. Patrick preached the gospel to Dichu and all his household with the result that they were instructed in the new faith, and all consented to be baptised. Furthermore, Dichu gave St. Patrick a barn in which to say Mass; and the church, subsequently built on the site of this barn, was called "Saul," from *Sabhal*, a barn.

Patrick now determined to go to the palace of the Ard-Righ at Tara. The High-King at the time was Laeghaire, son of Nial of the Nine Hostages, and cousin of the late King Dathi. At the time the Druids were celebrating a great festival, and the law of the land made it an offence punishable with death to light any fire until the Arch-Druid had kindled the sacred flame on Tara's Hill from the rays of their great deity, the sun. Landing at the mouth of the Boyne, St. Patrick and his missionaries marched on foot to the hill of Slane. There, as it was Holy Saturday, the eve of Easter, in ignorance of the law of the land, St. Patrick ordered the Paschal Fire to be lit.

Its blaze was visible at Tara and created considerable surprise and excitement, as might be expected.

King Laeghaire demanded the meaning of it from those about him, and then one of his druids is said to have prophetically exclaimed :

“ We cannot say who has kindled the fire, but if it be not quenched this night, 'twill never be quenched in Erin.”

The flame lighted that night of Christianity *has* never yet been extinguished in Ireland.

Laeghaire ordered that the offender be brought before him, and St. Patrick came, and boldly proclaimed before the monarch and all his court at Tara “ that he had come to quench the fires of pagan sacrifice in Ireland and light the flame of Christian faith.” It was on this famous occasion that he is said to have stooped and picked up a shamrock from the green sod beneath his feet in order to illustrate the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, three Persons in One God. So arose the use of the shamrock as the national emblem of Ireland.

Laeghaire's queen, Eileen or Ailinn, a daughter of the sub-king of Cashel, as well as the chief poet Dubtach, the famous brehon or judge Erc (who became first Bishop of Slane) and numerous others were converted. But the Ard-Righ himself remained obdurate, and the druids assailed Patrick bitterly and tried to compass his death by treachery. However, Laeghaire, probably influenced by his queen, accorded him permission to preach throughout the land so long as he did not disturb its peace.

From Tara St. Patrick went to Teltown, where a



great athletic meeting was being held, and converted many there. Thence passing through Longford, and founding a church at Ardagh, he went on to the palace of the Kings of Connaught, Rathcroghan, famed of Queen Mave, as already recorded. Seven years he is said to have spent in Connaught, converting the people; and after that time he went through Ossory to Cashel of the Kings, the capital and royal palace of Munster.

Angus was the name of the Munster King, and the romantic tale is told that while the Saint was preaching he accidentally struck the butt of his crozier, spiked so as to permit of its owner planting it upright in the turf beside him, through the monarch's foot, and did not discover the fact until he had finished his sermon. St. Patrick was then naturally all concern, seeing the royal foot bathed in blood and transfixed by his crozier.

"Oh, why did you not tell me, king?" he asked in troubled tones.

"I thought," replied Angus, "that it was part of the ceremony, to indicate in a manner the wounds the Lord bore for man's redemption."

"Oh, noble king!" thereupon exclaimed the Saint, deeply touched by his simple faith, "For thy reward, thy successors shall flourish here many years, and all win eternal life."

Twenty-seven monarchs of Angus's race succeeded him, and reigned at Cashel.

After numerous baptisms in Munster, St. Patrick went to Ulster and founded Armagh, retiring to Saul, his favourite retreat, as his end drew nigh. He died

on March 17th, the day on which all Irishmen celebrate his memory to-day, in the year 493. It is believed that he lies buried at Downpatrick.

All Ireland was now Christian ; the errors of Paganism had fled her shores before the coming of the true faith, and she now became known as " the Isle of Saints and Scholars." Innumerable were the churches and schools that uprose within her green valleys ; and she now, in her turn, sent forth missionaries to other lands.

Among the saints that Ireland produced at this period was St. Columba, or, as he is often called, St. Columb-cille, *i.e.*, Columba of the Churches, and most romantic is the story of his life. He obtained the loan of a Latin psalter from St. Finnen or Finian, and, without the owner's permission, made a copy of it. Wroth at this infringement of copyright, and denouncing it as a theft, St. Finnen claimed the transcription. The dispute was referred to the Ard-Righ at Tara, then King Diarmid or Dermot, a descendant of Nial of the Nine Hostages, for settlement or arbitration. He decided against St. Columba on the theory that as every cow owned its own calf, every book should own its own copy ; truly a Solomon's Judgment !

Very much dissatisfied with the verdict, St. Columba retired into seclusion. While resting in silence, the young prince of Connaught, Curnan MacHugh, fled to him for protection, having accidentally killed the steward of the High-King with a blow of his hurley in a game of hurling. King Diarmid sent some of his knights, who violated the sanctuary, tore Curnan from St. Columba's arms, and put him to death.

Justly indignant indeed, now, St. Columba withdrew from the Court at Tara, and repaired to his own people of Tyrconnell, the O'Donnells, descendants of Nial's son Conal, as the O'Neills of Tyr-Owen were of Eoghan or Owen, another son of the great Nial. The Hy-Nials of the North, or O'Donnells and O'Neills, incensed at the insult to their sainted kinsman, flew to arms, and, marching south, attacked Diarmid, who represented the Hy-Nials of the South.

A fearful battle, at Cooldrewny, in Sligo, resulted in the total defeat of Diarmid, who, however, promptly had his revenge by summoning a National Synod, at which he accused Columba of having caused the shedding of Christian blood. The Synod excommunicated St. Columba, and in reparation he was condemned by St. Molaise to perpetual exile from Ireland.

With a party of monks then, he set sail from Derry for Iona, and, establishing themselves there, he and his companions started out to evangelise Scotland or Alba, and so an Irishman, the great St. Columba, became the Apostle of that country, meeting with as great a success as St. Patrick had done in the mother-isle.

He solemnly consecrated Aidan king of the Scots on the *Lia Fail*, or Stone of Destiny. In some accounts of his life, St. Columb-Cille is alleged to have returned to Ireland, having obtained a remission of his sentence of exile by his winning so many souls to Christ, thus wiping away the Christian blood he had previously been the means of shedding. He returned to Iona, however, and died there, his body afterwards being brought back to Ireland.



As for the book that had led to his exiling, it was called the Cathach or "Battler," and the greatest romance hangs round it. It was "enshrined in a sort of portable altar," and, becoming the national relic of the O'Donnells, was carried round with their army, when they were going into battle, for more than a thousand years. It fell into the hands of the MacDermotts in 1497, but they restored it to the O'Donnell clan two years later. For fourteen hundred years it has been in the O'Donnell family, "and at present belongs to a baronet of that name who has permitted it to be exhibited in the museum of the Royal Irish Academy, where it can be seen by all." It is bound in silver and consists of fifty-eight leaves of parchment.

St. Columba is said to have caused his eyes to be bandaged on his return from exile to his native land—as he had sworn never again to look upon its shores—and to have been led blindfolded into the great Convention of kings, princes, bishops and chiefs, at Drumceat he came to attend.

King Diarmid was the last Irish monarch to dwell at Tara, and the reason of this is supposed to be because St. Ruadan or Rhodanus of Lorrha cursed the palace and all who should live within it for the Ard-Righ's violation of sanctuary in the case of the hapless Curnan MacHugh and another refugee, Hugh Gawrie of Hy-Many, who had taken refuge at Lorrha.

"No more to chiefs and ladies bright the harp of Tara  
swells.

The chord alone that breaks at night its tale of  
ruin tells."

“The harp of Tara hung silent upon the palace walls” (D’Alton), and thenceforth “Tara, darkened and blighted by the Saint’s curses, was deserted.”

A Saxon army from Northumbria, sent by Egfrid, the King of that part of England, now invaded Ireland and ravaged the coast from Dublin to Drogheda for a time. But a far worse foe was already on the seas and fated to lay both Saxon England and Gaelic Ireland prostrate at his feet for a time—the heathen Dane.

## CHAPTER V.

THE COMING OF THE DANES.—HOW MALACHY WON  
“THE COLLAR OF GOLD,” AND BRIAN BORU  
BROKE THE DANISH POWER AT CLONTARF.

The hardy sea-rovers and fierce pirates of the eighth, ninth and tenth centuries, who are generally classed all together under the name of “Danes,” first invaded Ireland in 795 A.D. They landed in Lambay Island, near Dublin, and plundered it. Only a small party, they went off again, but they took back with them to their bleak northern homes glowing accounts of the smiling green isle of Erin, and its rich treasures, only waiting for bold spirits to bring away by the strong hand.

These Danes, Northmen, Norsemen or Vikings, as they may be called at will, came from the inhospitable shores of the Baltic and North Sea, and were Pagans still, worshipping Odin, the god of war, Thor the Thunderer, and Freya, the Scandinavian Venus. The Irish called those that hailed from Norway and Sweden—Fingalls, *i.e.*, white strangers, from their fair hair and complexions, and those that came from Denmark itself, Duvgalls, or black strangers, on account of their swarthy faces and dark hair.

At first these wild marauders only “came in detached parties and solely for plunder, confining their ravages to



the islands and the coast. But, becoming bolder by reason of their success, they penetrated by degrees into the interior of the country." Wherever they appeared, they spread havoc and terror. They spared neither sex nor age, slaughtering all who opposed them and carrying off those who submitted, men, women and children, to be sold as slaves.

Believing that death on the field of battle threw open the gates of Valhalla, their sensual Paradise, to them, they were as brave as they were ferocious—fearless and stubborn in battle, slow to admit themselves beaten. Their famous *Reafan* or Raven, their battle-flag, representing a black raven on a blood-red field, was supposed to be endowed with magic powers and to have been woven in a single noontide by the three daughters of one of their most famous sea-kings, Ragnar Lodbrog. Lodbrog did not trouble Ireland, apparently, but confined his attentions more to her sister isle, Britain, although some authorities have tried to identify him with the great Danish invader of our land, the renowned Turgesius or Thorgils.

That those two renowned marauders were two distinct men, and not one and the same person is pretty evident from any close study of the period and of the separate histories of England and Ireland.

It was about A.D. 832 that the great Viking Thorgils, whose name is more familiar under its Latinised form of Turgesius, landed with a great fleet of 120 ships, and conceived the idea of making the country a Danish kingdom, subjecting all broad Erin to his sway. The way for this ambition of his had been

paved, to a certain extent, by the numerous previous inroads of his countrymen. Although severely checked from time to time the savage raiders had considerably weakened the resistance of the Irish people. These fled now, for the most part, at the very tidings of the coming of their bloodthirsty Pagan foes. Moreover, the native chiefs and petty kings played into the hands of Turgesius by their own petty, but bitter, jealousies and warfare.

Simultaneously entering the Boyne and the Liffey, Turgesius and his Danes ravaged Meath, the patrimony of the Ard-Righ, as well as Louth and Armagh, forcing the primate of this latter county to flee into Munster. The gold and silver sacred vessels of the monasteries were the great attraction to the rapacious Pagans, who "butchered the monks like sheep," and it was now—as monastery keeps, it has been conclusively proved—that the famous round towers of our land were erected everywhere. Within these towers the church plate would be conveyed from the adjoining abbeys and monasteries at the first signal of alarm from a sentinel posted on the top floor; and, if besieged, the defenders would retreat from floor to floor, taking up the ladders after them and raining down heavy stones and other missiles until either help came or the foe retired baffled, the latter case being as likely as the former.

The Ard-Righ and provincial native princes offered but feeble opposition to the Pagans, and Danish colonies were established at Limerick, Dundalk, and other places, including one at Rindoon, Lough Ree, where Turgesius now fixed his headquarters and ruled

as the sovereign lord of Ireland, self-styled. He was able, too, to enforce his authority in great measure and levied a dreadful tax or tribute from the subject Irish people round. This tribute was called "Nosegelt" or "Nosemoney," *gelt* being Danish for money, because the penalty for its non-payment was the cutting off of the defaulter's nose.

Ruled by ruthless heathens, with their glorious monasteries everywhere in ruins, their schools, renowned hitherto through Christianity, destroyed, hardly left enough to keep body and soul together, it seemed the end of all things to the hapless people, when there came to the dignity of Ard-Righ—now a rather empty title and dignity it would seem—one worthy at last of its glorious traditions.

All Ulster and Connaught, with Meath, was at this time subject to Turgesius. Meath was the Ard-Righ's own special kingdom, and it seemed a hopeless task for him to think of anything like an effective blow against the Danish tyrant. But High-King Malachy determined upon a stratagem. He feigned compliance and complacency under Turgesius's rule, and offered him his daughter in marriage. The girl was most beautiful and the Danish monarch readily fell into the trap.

The lady with fifteen attendants went to Turgesius's palace, which was close by King Malachy's. The attendants were apparently lovely maidens like their young mistress, but instead they were all young men of handsome appearance, merely disguised, and with arms under their disguises. At a given signal they fell upon Turgesius and his officers, slew all in the palace



but the fierce old monarch himself, and carried him off prisoner to Malachy, who had him bound hand and foot and drowned in Lough Owel. Malachy then raised and armed the subject people, and the Danish supremacy was, for a time, overthrown.

But Ireland did not long enjoy her immunity. Fresh hordes of Danes poured into the devoted land, panting to avenge the defeat of their predecessors and, if possible, possess themselves in turn of the fair valleys and plains.

Danish colonies at Dublin, Limerick, and Waterford had managed to hold their own, when their countrymen everywhere else had been driven into the sea. With these strongholds as passage-ports into the country, the new comers spread once more over this in every direction. From Limerick in particular, Imar, a famous Viking, and his sons, with a great army laid waste Munster, and exacted a tax of an ounce of silver per head in lieu of slavery.

The Dalcassians and Eugenians were the two great governing Southern clans, as the Hy-Nials were the predominant and kingly race of the north of Ireland. Thomond or North Munster (Clare to-day) was the country of the Dalcassians, who were a very proud and haughty race, claiming exemption from taxes under the Ard-Righ and the hereditary right of forming the van in battle and the rearguard in retreat. From them, alternately with the Eugenians, were always chosen the Kings of Cashel.

About the middle of the tenth century, the Dalcassian prince on the throne of Munster was Mahon, and he had a younger brother named Brian, who accompanied him

in all his military expeditions against the Danes. This younger brother of the ruling sovereign was the afterwards justly celebrated Brian Boru or Borumha, *i.e.*, "Brian of the Tribute," whose memory is the brightest of all the ancient High Kings of Erin. Students of both Irish and English history must remark the great and striking resemblance between Brian Boru and the Saxon King Alfred. Both succeeded brothers, after being those brothers' right hand men and ablest lieutenants in the fighting with the same terrible foe, the Pagan Danish invaders; both conquered these, broke their power in one great battle, the one at Clontarf, the other at Ethandune, and freed their respective nations for ever practically from the heathen yoke.

King Mahon for a time indeed made peace with the all-conquering invaders, submitted to them, but Brian would not, and, retreating into the forests and mountains of north Munster, carried on the same sort of guerilla warfare as his Saxon counterpart did in the fens of Somersetshire. He sallied forth from time to time, inflicting a severe reverse on the Danes; he would cut off their supplies, and, sending out frequent foraging parties, harass them in every conceivable way.

At the first favourable chance he sent a letter to his brother, reproaching him for so tamely laying down his arms to the foreign invader, and the letter stung Mahon to the quick. Assembling an army again, Mahon joined Brian's guerilla band, and, once more united in love and arms, the two brothers met the Danes of Limerick at Sulcoit, now Solohead, three

miles from Tipperary, and routed them completely. The victorious Thomond men then laid siege to Limerick itself, and captured it, and King Mahon was firmly re-established on the throne of Cashel as King of Munster.

But the Eugenian pretender or rival to the throne, the Prince of Desmond or South Munster, whose name was Molloy, conspired against King Mahon with Donovan, the chief of Hy-Carbry, and Ivar, the leader of the remnant of the Limerick Danes, who had taken refuge in the holy island of Scattery and fortified it. A peaceful conference was suggested by the traitors at the dun or moated fortress of Donovan, and Mahon was invited to it, the safety of all who attended being guaranteed by the Bishop of Cork.

Mahon went, all unsuspecting, unarmed and unattended, and was treacherously seized by Donovan, and handed over to Molloy, who suddenly plunged his sword into him. This, under the eyes of the horrified Bishop of Cork, who had not time to intervene. The murdered man had with him a copy of the Gospel of St. Finnbar, a relic much venerated in the Catholic Church, and it is said that as he held the book open before him, deeming Molloy would never commit such a sacrilege as to strike him through its sacred pages, the murderer's weapon pierced "right through the vellum which became all stained and matted with his blood."

Brian was at Kincora, the famous palace of the Dalcassian princes, when the news of the foul deed reached him. He swore an oath of dreadful vengeance, and faithfully, only too faithfully, did he



execute it. By the rule of alternate succession, Molloy, as the Eugenic prince, now became King of Munster, but he reckoned without his host in Brian, if he thought that youth incapable of avenging his beloved brother's death. Brian, by his brother's death King of Thomond, hurled himself first, swift as a thunderbolt and as deadly, against the Danes under Ivar in Scatterry. Ivar and his two sons were slain and their people utterly destroyed. Now Brian turned on Molloy, the second but chief murderer of his brother. In a battle at Macroom between the Dalcassians and the Eugenicans, the infamous Molloy fell by the hand of Morrogh, Brian's eldest son, a lad of only fifteen. Siege was laid, practically simultaneously, to Donovan's fortress, and in its attack the last of the three murderers was killed.

Brian was now undisputed master of Munster, but he determined to make himself Ard-Righ or High-King over all Erin. He invaded Ossory and Leinster, as well as Connaught and Meath, subduing each in turn.

The Ard-Righ at the time was well worthy also, as it happened, of the sceptre—Malachy the Second, or Malachy More—he whom our national poet Moore has justly celebrated as wearing "the collar of gold which he won from the proud invader." He in his turn, rightly resenting those unlawful incursions, invaded Thomond and defeated the Dalcassians in a great fight. A venerable tree, under the shade of which the Dalcassian or Thomond kings were always solemnly inaugurated, he cut down and used to roof part of a new palace he was building.

Malachy too, in his half of the country, had constantly fought and inflicted reverses on the Danish invaders. He only allowed them to remain on condition they paid him tribute. The exploit so celebrated by the poet Moore and referred to above, took place when he defeated the famous Viking chief, Tomar, at Dublin. In those heroic days it was a common thing for the leader of one side in a battle to challenge to single combat the leader of the opposing side. Malachy either challenged or was challenged by Tomar, who was bidding fair to become a second Turgesius, and the Irish Ard-Righ killed the redoubtable Norse warrior in a terrific hand-to-hand duel, and afterwards fought and killed another Danish prince named Carolus. Tomar wore a massive collar of gold, and Malachy took this from round his neck and clasped it about his own, and from the nerveless hand of the second Viking the Ard-Righ took a magnificent jewel-hilted sword.

Naturally such a man was not going to quietly surrender his birthright of High-King to the first comer, and a dreadful civil war was now inaugurated between him and Brian of Munster for the suzerainty of the island. For long—twenty years—the war was waged with varying success, and unhappily, this internecine strife enabled the Dane to again make good his footing in green Erin, so much so that at last Brian and Malachy very prudently agreed to sink their personal quarrel and unite against the common foe.

The two Irish Kings agreed to divide Ireland between them into Leh-Conn and Legh-Mogh once more, as their ancestors had done ; and then, joining forces, they

gave battle to the Danish invaders. These had come at the solicitation of Maelmorra, King of Leinster, who had revolted against the Ard-Righ. Harold, the Danish Crown Prince, was in command of the invaders, and undoubtedly the fate of the kingdom hung on the battle that ensued at Glenmama, near Dunlavin, in Wicklow (A.D. 1000).

It was a most glorious victory for the two Irish Kings. The Danish Prince and 4,000 of his men were slain, and the renegade Maelmorra, King of Leinster, was taken prisoner but spared. Now was it that Brian, who was practically High-King, obtained his surname or *sobriquet* Boru "of the Tribute." To punish the Leinster men, he re-imposed the cow-tribute or "borumha," which Ard-Righs had formerly exacted from them.

Most unjustly Brian turned on Malachy, who all along would seem to have been of a nobler character than his great rival, and insisted on being crowned High-King. This was practically a usurpation, for the position had hitherto only been held by descendants of Nial of the Nine Hostages, by kings of the blood of the Hy-Nial.

Malachy, unable to hold his own in the field, resigned the sceptre and became, to his infinite credit, Brian's devoted adherent as well as tributary king.

High-King Brian proved himself one of the wisest and best rulers Erin had ever known. Once more the country smiled with peace and prosperity. Religion again raised its head, and schools and monastic institutions sprang up all over the land once more. Brian held his court at Kincora with a splendour not to be surpassed at any other royal court in

Europe. As Moore has sung, a lady, wearing gems "rich and rare" and "a gold ring on her wand," is said to have travelled unattended, yet unmolested, from Tory Island to Glandore, her "maiden smile in safety" lighting "her round the green isle."

But the treachery of the Leinster King, Maelmorra, had only been scotched, not killed. He entered again into conspiracy with the subject Danes, and they sent secretly to their brethren in Norway and Denmark, the Orkney and Shetlands, the Isle of Man, Northumbria in England, and the Hebrides, urging a general and united descent upon the Irish shore.

Maelmorra's sister, Gormfleth, was the subject Danish King of Dublin's mother, and she helped the treason and invasion in every conceivable way "She was the fairest of women, but she did all things ill." A second Helen of Troy she appears to have been, and a forerunner of that other faithless woman whose elopement led to the Norman invasion of Ireland a century or so later. She was the divorced wife of Malachy and also of a former Danish prince, and she now offered herself secretly in marriage, together with the crown of all Ireland, to both Brodar, the Danish king of Man, and Sigurd, Earl of the Orkneys.

Twenty thousand strong, the Danish *armada* landed in Dublin Bay, the whole surface of which was covered with their ships. Brian was not caught napping. He received timely word of the invasion; and, with a force about equal to the invaders, marched swiftly on Dublin and drew up his forces on the famous plain of CLONTARF outside the city



Bloody was the fearful conflict which ensued on Good Friday, 1014 A.D. All day the battle raged, neither side seeming to gain the upper hand. It was chiefly waged hand to hand with the battle-axe, in the use of which the Irish had grown as expert as their foes. At length the Danes began to retreat to their ships. Malachy came up with a fresh contingent of troops in time to fall upon them and complete the rout. The Danes lost 7,000 men and the Irish 4,000.

But dreadful was the loss on both sides of princes and chiefs. Brodar, the Manx Dane prince, fleeing after the battle, came upon Brian's tent unguarded. He and his escort burst in and found the aged Brian who had not, on account of his age, taken part in the actual fighting—he was 88—on his knees in prayer. The savage Viking clove in his head with an axe, but was immediately afterwards captured and put to death by Brian's truant guards. Morrogh, Brian's son, who commanded in the fight, fell with his son Turlogh, in the battle; and Maelmorra the traitor, the Norwegian Prince Amrud and Sigurd of Orkney perished on the Danish side.

One more romantic episode ere this chapter is closed. As the victorious but sorrowing army of Dalcassians was returning home to Munster, it was intercepted by Magillapatrik, Prince of Ossory, whose father had once been put in fetters by Brian Boru. The wounded and bleeding heroes of Clontarf bade their abler brethren bind them to stakes in the front rank, so that they could strike blows with their battle-axes though unable to stand.

This was done, and the Ossory men were so struck

with awe and admiration for their brave foes that, with all the true generosity and chivalry of Irishmen, they forebore to attack, cheered them and let them proceed unmolested





## PART II.

### THE ANGLO-NORMAN INVASION

There was a clash of weapons in the air—  
Ruin of peace and seasonable good ;  
And, flanked by gallant natures everywhere,  
The green flag staggered over fields of blood.  
The Norman steed was stabled in thy fanes,  
The Norman bugles rang upon the heath ;  
Thy children bared their hearts and spurned their chains,  
And sealed their glorious constancy in death.

“ Our Faith—Our Fatherland,”  
By JOHN F. O'DONNELL.





## CHAPTER VI.

HOW DERMOT MACMURROUGH BROUGHT THE ENGLISH  
OVER.

The power of the Danes in Ireland was broken for ever by the victory of Clontarf, but King Brian's successful usurpation of the sceptre of the Ard-Righ now led to other petty princes thinking of likewise grasping the suzerainty.

Malachy became High-King again on Brian's death, and ruled well during his life time, but when he died the whole country fell away, the old discords cropping up again. It was in his seventy-third year that Malachy "the Great and Good," died, and the *Four Masters* justly style him in their Annals, "the pillar of dignity and nobility of the western world." He was the last King of Ireland of the true old Hy-Nial stock.

The son of Brian, now to be known as the head of the O'Briens, became Ard-Righ and handed on the crown to others of his family, but the O'Briens found foes on all sides, and another family, the O'Connors, destroyed Kincora and subdued all Munster. Roderick O'Connor became Ard-Righ and was paid homage by the Clan Conal. He divided Tyrowen between the O'Loughlins and O'Neills, and

for a time "no Ard-Righ was ever obeyed more readily or could bring together a greater force." But he was destined, alas, to be the last free King of Ireland Dermot MacMurrough, whose name has been accursed in the hearts of all Irishmen through the succeeding centuries, was King of Leinster. In the year 1152, he induced Devorghil, the wife of Tiernan O'Rourke, Prince of Breffny, to elope with him. O'Rourke appealed to the Ard-Righ for justice, and King O'Connor promptly marched against the offender, and compelled him to restore O'Rourke's wife and do penance. But Dermot MacMurrough nurtured revenge and was a second Maelmorra, the traitor of Brian Boru's day. He fled the country, hated even by his own people for his cruelty and utter baseness, and his cousin was made King of Leinster in his stead by the Ard-Righ.

Panting for revenge, he sought out the Norman King of England, Henry II., at that time in Aquitaine, a province of France; and here let me correct a popular error. The Saxon was *not* the ancient foe of Ireland, but the Norman. The Saxon was Ireland's old ally. Harold, the last of the Saxon Kings, had found support and allies in Ireland, and because he had done so his Norman conquerors bore the Irish no good-will.

Dermot the Traitor asked aid from the English King to get back his princedom, and the wily English monarch saw in giving him that aid a chance of establishing a footing in the sister isle. Henry, however, had his hands full at the time and could not attend to the matter. He, however, gave Dermot



permission to enlist such of his followers as cared to proceed to Ireland. Dermot returned to England, armed with this permit, and repaired to the court of Griffith, the Prince of North Wales. He obtained promises of support from Griffith and several of the Norman barons living on the Welsh borders, chief among whom were Richard de Clare, the Earl of Pembroke, generally known as *Strongbow*, Robert Fitzstephen, and Maurice Fitzgerald, all three adventurers in needy circumstances.

Strongbow or Pembroke, in fact, bound Dermot down to promising him the right of succession to his kingdom—a power which, under the law of *Tanistry*, or the Irish elective method of succession, Dermot could not rightly give—and the hand of his only daughter Eva as wife.

To open the campaign Dermot sailed back to Ireland, accompanied only by Griffith and a band of Fleming mercenaries, the Norman barons promising to follow him as soon as they could get an army together. The High-King Roderick met and slew Griffith at Kellistown in Carlow, and Dermot humbly submitted, giving hostages and gold for his good behaviour and retiring to the monastery of Ferns.

In the month of May, true to his promise at any rate, the Norman baron Fitzstephen landed with a small force of armour-clad knights, men-at-arms, and archers at Bannow Bay, Wexford. Dermot promptly joined the invaders with 500 horse. Wexford surrendered to them, and Ossory was invaded, Dermot raising a force of 3,000 of his countrymen. The mail-clad Norman cavalry bore down all opposition,

for their foes wore no defensive armour and were by no means as well-trained, well-armed, or well-mounted.

High-King Roderick, alarmed at these proceedings, now held a meeting of the tributary princes at Tara; and, as a result, a large army was brought together, at the head of which he marched against Dermot and his Norman allies. Outnumbered, MacMurrough resorted to guile. He said he only asked to be restored to his principality, and he would recognise the suzerainty of the Ard-Righ, dismiss his foreign allies, and introduce no more of them into the land, but live at peace with his neighbours. He offered his son Connor as a hostage, and King Roderick very foolishly consented to the terms he offered.

Dermot was only waiting for reinforcements from his other Norman confederates; and Fitzgerald came in the autumn (A.D. 1169), with sufficient men to induce him to break through his solemn compact with King Roderick and march on Dublin, which had refused to receive him back as its prince O'Brien, king of Limerick, now revolted against Roderick, and, deeming the time propitious for himself seizing the position of Ard-Righ, Dermot sent letters urging the tardy Strongbow to come now or never.

Strongbow was not slow to respond. He sent over a small force under Raymond le Gros, or "the Fat," in the spring of 1170, and on the 27th of August following, he came himself with 1,600 men, of whom 200 were heavy horse. Joined by Raymond the Fat,

Strongbow attacked Waterford. The town was a walled city, built by the Danes, and the citizens resisted stoutly, twice repulsing the assailants. Raymond the Fat contrived a breach in the defences however, and, bursting through it, the Normans got in.

Dermot came with his daughter Eva in time to see the town captured; and, amid the smoking ruins of the city, the ill-omened marriage of Strongbow and the Traitor's daughter was duly solemnized. The Normans, now swollen to 5,000 without counting the MacMurroughs, marched through the mountains of Wicklow upon Dublin. Fearing butchery if the city surrendered, the citizens sent out their archbishop, the great St. Laurence O'Toole, to parley for terms.

He was received with every symptom of respect in the Norman camp, but while the citizens were thus deluded into temporary neglect of vigilance, two parties of the English, under Milo de Cogan and Raymond the Fat, broke into the city and commenced an indiscriminate massacre.

High-King Roderick had approached to the relief of the city with a large army, but he seems at this crisis to have been most "feeble and vacillating." Unprepared to besiege the English within the walls of Dublin, he broke up his camp at Clondalkin and pusillanimously retired towards Connaught. Strongbow followed at his heels, fell suddenly upon his camp at Finglas, and routed his great host of something like 30,000 fighting men, almost without striking a blow. Roderick, "the vain and incapable," was bathing at the time and narrowly escaped with his life. "Nor would his soldiers have had any reason for



regret if he was pierced by some English lance," writes D'Alton.

But now Nemesis overtook the traitor, Dermot Mac-Murrough. He was struck down, it is said, by a loathsome disease, to which he succumbed at Ferns, 1171. He is often referred to as Dermot 'of the English,' as he brought them into Ireland.

Strongbow now proclaimed himself King of Leinster and thus aroused the jealousy of his own rightful sovereign, Henry II. of England, who feared that his ambition was to become King of all Ireland. Henry sent messengers commanding Strongbow and the other Norman barons and knights to return to England. Strongbow temporised by sending a submissive letter, declaring that he was but trying to win the country for his liege lord, the King, and inviting the monarch over. Thereupon Henry, in October 1171, sailed for Ireland with a fleet of over 400 ships and an army of 500 knights and 4,000 men-at-arms.

Apparently it was more to make a parade of his power than attempt a conquest of the country that he came to Ireland, and many of the native chiefs regarded him as coming to protect them from the cruelties of the first invaders. He landed at Waterford, and most of the southern princes, seeing no hope of adequate resistance under the lead of the incapable Roderick O'Connor, came and paid him their homage. Among these were the Kings of Thomond and Desmond, and the princes of Decies, of Ossory, and of Breffny, as well as O'Carroll of Oriel, and lesser chiefs. It is alleged that even

High-King Roderick reluctantly admitted his authority. The Northern chiefs, the O'Neills and O'Donnells, alone refused to acknowledge him as their liege lord.

In order to ingratiate himself with the Irish, Henry threw into prison the savage Fitzstephen for a time, releasing him afterwards. He proceeded to parcel out the country amongst his faithful barons "as if he had conquered it by force of arms." Strongbow, of course, was given Leinster, Meath was given to one Hugh de Lacy, Ulster to John De Courcy, Connaught to De Burgho. Milo de Cogan and Fitzstephen got Cork. Henry, nevertheless, it is stated, made no attempt to have himself recognised as "King of Ireland" by the Irish, but merely posed as an arbitrator. He certainly restored something like peace and order in the land during his six months' stay, at the end of which time he was recalled to England to answer to the papal legate for the murder of St. Thomas à Becket, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and by rumours of a rebellion organised against him by his sons.

He left the government of affairs in the hands of Hugh de Lacy, departing from Wexford on April 17th, 1172.

No sooner was he gone than the Norman adventurers began to plunder right and left, and the native chiefs took up arms to resist their encroachments and enormities. Dermot the Traitor's son, Donald, disputed Strongbow's claim to the kingdom of Leinster, but was treacherously put to death. The O'Dempseys waylaid and routed some of Strongbow's men, and O'Brien of Limerick defeated

the redoubtable Norman himself at Thurles Strongbow escaped by the swiftness of his horse with only a few men, leaving 1,700 more dead upon the field.

On this, High-King Roderick took heart of grace and seized Trim, but Raymond the Fat and De Cogan stormed Limerick, and found one MacCarthy ready to help them against another. Meantime Strongbow died of an ulcer in the foot spreading upwards over his body. Prince John of England now visited Ireland and treated the Irish chiefs, who came to see him, with the utmost contumely. But he treated his Norman adherents no better. He ordered castles to be built at Limerick, Lismore and other places. The Irish vigorously attacked these strongholds, and captured them, and John, well named "Lackland," afterwards, when left Ireland as his patrimony, was recalled by his father.

Roderick O'Connor retired in his old age to the abbey of Cong, and there ended his days; and during the whole of the next century the history of Ireland may be summed up in one ceaseless struggle between Anglo-Norman and Native Irish without either side gaining much advantage. The Irish defeated the English quite as often as the reverse, and had the native chiefs only united and sunk their own miserable jealousies of one another, they could have swept all the vaunted mail-clad chivalry of the invader into the sea, again and again. But alas, they would not combine or drop their wretched squabbling, and we find even the two grand northern clans which up to the last maintained their independence, the O'Neills and



O'Donnells, ready to fly at one another's throats at the first excuse, fearful of either's rise in power.

This most lamentable lack of unity, this ceaseless domestic dissension could only have one result, that of helping on the English conquest, of practically riveting the chains forged by the early Norman invaders.

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE BRUCES IN IRELAND.

We have said that the Irish just as often defeated the English as *vice versa*. Milo de Cogan, who invaded Connaught in the lifetime of the High-King Roderick O'Connor, to help Roderick's rebellious son Morrough against his father, was most signally defeated, utterly routed by the High-King and the true Connaughtmen; and,—let us give the last High-King of Erin his due,—though he was not fitted for the part he was called upon to play, or to face the exigencies of his time, he nevertheless maintained the independence of his own native Connaught. No Norman castle was therein erected, no Norman set his foot there for long.

The most brilliant victory achieved by the Irish, though, over their English foes in the thirteenth century, was that of the noble and heroic Godfrey O'Donnell in 1257. The O'Donnells, or Clan-Conal of Tyrconnell, had so often repulsed the English attempts at the invasion of their territory that they had come to be looked upon as the grand bulwark of Irish liberty and a standing and terrible menace to the entire English colony. It was decided to make a joint effort to crush them,

and to this end the Viceroy and his Lord Deputy or Lord Justice, Maurice Fitzgerald, the first Earl of Desmond, assembled the biggest and finest English army that had yet mustered in one place on Irish soil. Knights and squires and men-at-arms, horse and men sheathed in complete steel mail of proof, marched to the muster from every Norman castle and settlement in the country. The far-famed and deservedly dreaded English bowmen flocked also to the rendezvous; and the march on the devoted O'Donnells was begun.

The chief of the clan, the Prince of Tyrconnell, Godfrey O'Donnell, "was in fact one of the most skilful captains of the age." It was the weight of his arm that the English had already so often felt and feared so much. He and his faithful clansmen met Fitzgerald's proud host at Credan Kille or Drumcliff in Sligo, and the battle lasted for hours. It was most stubbornly contested on both sides. The mail-clad chivalry of the Normans hurled itself again and again, lances in rest, upon the "saffron-kilted Irish clansmen," who, however, met the living avalanche of blood and iron with a steady front of spears, from which it recoiled broken and disordered.

Then the few Irish horse and battle-axemen got in amongst the deadly English archers while these were stringing their bows, and cut them to pieces, wheeling then upon the mail-clad knights and men-at-arms as these reeled back from the shock of the spears, and completing the rout. Archer and mail-clad horseman fled, intermingled in utter confusion, from that fatal field, pursued by the swift-galloping light Irish horse,



the nimble-footed kerne and heavy-armed gallow-glass. Fitzgerald, seeing the day lost, disdaining flight, rushed into the thick of the fighting in search of the Irish prince. The two met. Fitzgerald hewed at Godfrey and dealt him a mortal wound. But, retaining his seat upon his horse—notwithstanding the fact that at this date and for three centuries after it, the same as long anterior to it, the Irish rode without stirrups,—the Tyrconnell chief felled the Lord Deputy from his saddle, bleeding and dying also, with a swinging stroke of his battle-axe.

The O'Donnells pursued the English to Sligo and plundered and burned that town, night alone intervening to save the survivors from utter extermination.

Lord Fitzgerald retired to a Franciscan monastery at Youghal where he died in the habit of a monk. His conqueror, also dying, was unable to follow up the great triumph. Nevertheless he forthwith marched to demolish “the only castle the English had dared to raise on the soil of Tyrconnell.” This was accomplished; and now we have to record, to our sorrow and the lasting disgrace of the O'Neill of that day, that this chief thought it a favourable opportunity to fall upon the O'Donnells, wearied and worn and disordered as they were after their fierce fight, and destroy them. The heroic Godfrey, feeling death strong upon him, ordered his men to place him upon his bed or bier and carry him in their midst to do battle with the dastard O'Neill.

Fortune favoured the true and brave. The men of Tyrconnell routed their ungenerous foes of

Tyrowen, and the great Godfrey lived long enough to learn of the fate of the day, then expired upon his litter, to the inconsolable grief of his victorious clansmen.

This O'Neill the following year caused himself to be proclaimed High-King of Ireland, but his conduct towards the heroic Godfrey O'Donnell is proof that he was unworthy of the title or of support by his fellow Irishmen. He *may* have repented of his folly and meant well, but he had made a very bad beginning ; and, as it happened, his military talents too were not equal to the task. He was defeated and killed at Downpatrick in 1260.

The next episode of Irish history of any note was the gallant effort of the Bruces and the Scots to free Ireland. In 1314, the great victory of Bannockburn by King Robert Bruce of Scotland over a vastly superior force of English under the incompetent Edward II., put the idea into the mind of Donald O'Neill, a truly noble specimen of his race, of seeking the aid of the gallant, lion-hearted Scottish monarch to achieve Irish independence.

Donald was the son of the last Ard-Righ or High-King, Brian O'Neill, for in spite of all the incessant turmoil, Ireland still had her High-Kings, and they were, more or less, recognised by both Irish chiefs and the English colonists. As heir or next in succession to the Ard-Righ's throne, the generous Donald offered to forego his right in favour of King Robert's brother, Edward Bruce, and he furthermore exerted himself to bring all the Irish clans to amity and union, and called on all the clergy to help him in this.

He also addressed a letter to the Pope John XXII, giving a detailed account of Irish grievances against the English, stating that he had no hope of getting justice from England and he had in consequence invited Edward Bruce, brother of King Robert of Scotland, to come and reign over them, and imploring the Sovereign Pontiff's blessing and support. The Pope thought to solve the difficulty by simply urging upon the English King the necessity of treating the Irish with more justice.

Let it be remembered that at that day it was reckoned no crime for an Englishman to kill an Irishman in any way, and quite a laudable thing for the English to break treaties with the natives, to commit the most flagrant cruelties, robberies and outrages, without the latter having any hope of redress save by retaliation.

Needless, perhaps to say, the Irish chiefs did not all respond to O'Neill's patriotic appeal, though they had not the excuse of alleging in the circumstances that he had his own purposes to serve. As for the bishops and priests, they "were so cowed that they were afraid even to complain" against English tyranny. According to Dr. D'Alton: "Monks of Irish birth were excluded from those establishments which their own countrymen had built and endowed."

The Bruces, however, responded, and in May, 1315, Edward Bruce landed at Larne in Antrim with 6,000 men, "well armed in the English fashion." How foolish, too, was it of the Irish to keep to their thin saffron-cloth kilts instead of adopting the iron panoply that made their Norman foes so invincible,

to say nothing of adopting the superior arms of the latter ! A man on horseback could never hope to deal so effective a blow with sword or axe without stirrups as with. Rising in and supported by stirrups, far greater vigour is given to a blow.

But no, the Irish *would* keep to old ideas and—lost their freedom through their obstinate conservatism.

A fleet of 300 ships brought over Bruce's army, and to those that looked upon the noble sight which they must have presented in Larne Harbour it must have seemed that a brighter day had at last dawned for Ireland—that indeed it was the sunburst of freedom, after all the darkness of the past two centuries and a half. Alas, how soon were those bright hopes to be dashed to the ground !

The truly patriotic Donald O'Neill and a dozen other northern chiefs promptly joined the brave Scots, In two divisions, one under the gallant Randolph, Earl of Moray, and the other under Edward Bruce himself, they advanced on Carrickfergus. James Grant, a Scottish historian, in his "British Battles," says that on their march they utterly routed 20,000 Anglo-Irish troops, led by Mandeville, Logan, and Bisset. Carrickfergus itself was taken but the castle was able to hold out, as Bruce had no military engines for its siege, and naturally was not going to delay his march to construct such. He passed rapidly southwards, laying waste the English settlements and defeating, according to Grant, "two chiefs in the English interest with 4,000 men, in the strong pass of Innermalam," and capturing a great herd of cattle.



Dundalk and Ardee now fell into his hands and were burned. Richard De Burgh, the Red Earl of Ulster, along with some of the factious Irish chiefs of Connaught, joined forces to oppose him with the Viceroy, Sir Edmund Butler. However, Butler and De Burgh parted, and the latter alone advanced to meet Bruce. Acting under the wise Donald O'Neill's advice, Bruce retreated and then resorted to a ruse, for the Red Earl's force was vastly superior to his.

He quietly drew all his men out of his camp at Ballymena, leaving the fires burning, the banners flying and the tents standing, and making a circuit, attacked the English in flank. "De Burgh's army was swept off the field by the headlong and irresistible onslaught of the Scots and Irish clansmen, his best soldiers were killed, his bravest knights were among the slain, his brother William was taken prisoner."

The victorious Scoto-Irish army marched on steadily southward. All Ulster was now in their hands, save only Carrickfergus Castle. At Kells, Sir Roger Mortimer attempted to check them with 15,000 men. They swept this force out of their path, and Mortimer fled to Dublin and embarked for England. Some of the Norman De Lacys now joined the Patriots, the first of the Norman settlers to show themselves "more Irish than the Irish themselves."

At Arscoll, Butler faced the Patriots with 30,000 men. But this great army was defeated by Bruce also, chiefly through the discord in the English camp among the Anglo-Irish leaders. The goddess of discord had long opposed Ireland's efforts at independence; she was now temporarily befriending them

Bruce was compelled, however, through lack of provisions to retreat to Dundalk; and there on the 1st of May, 1316, amid the acclamations of the Irish, he was formally crowned King of Ireland under the title of Edward I

Fickle Fortune seemed to turn against the brave Bruce immediately after. He and his Irish allies suffered several reverses, and a particularly severe one at Athenry, where the Connaughtmen, the O'Connors, who had declared for the patriot cause, lost 8,000 slain, being mown down in swaths by the English bowmen before they could use their battle-axes. The gallant young Phelim O'Connor, Prince of Connaught, aged 23, was among the slain. Carrickfergus Castle, however, reduced by starvation, surrendered to Bruce; and now the renowned warrior, King Robert Bruce himself, came over to Ireland to aid his brother, bringing reinforcements with him.

Unable to blockade Dublin for lack of ships, the two royal brothers marched into Munster, where they met no opposition—nor any support, the factious and unpatriotic O'Brien and other chiefs allying themselves with their national foes. Roger Mortimer, returned to Ireland as Viceroy, had brought back 15,000 men with him, and the Geraldines, Butlers, and De La Poer had mustered 30,000 at Kilkenny. A dreadful famine, too, fell upon the land. With no provisions and unwilling to ravage the territory of even their factious Irish foes, there was nothing for the two brothers but retreat, which they did through Cashel, Kildare and Trim, reaching Dundalk safely. The English, though far outnumbering them, feared to waylay them, thinned and weakened by disease and famine, too, though they were

Robert Bruce returned to Scotland, for his own kingdom was again threatened ; but promised to send reinforcements. In 1318, the dreadful famine being past, and food once more plentiful, Sir John de Bermingham took the field against Bruce, advancing northward with 20,000 men. Against the shrewd counsels of Donald O'Neill and the other Irish chiefs, the brave but headstrong King Edward dared to give battle with a force little more than 2,000 strong.

The battle took place at Faughart, near Dundalk, and almost at the first onset the heavy mail-clad English cavalry bore down the Scottish front. An English knight, Sir John Maupas, a burgher of Dundalk, knowing that the fortune of the day depended on Bruce, rushed into the Scottish ranks and slew him "with a blow of a leaden plummet or slung-shot," from which type of weapon it would seem that the deed was achieved by stealing suddenly upon him and taking him unawares, striking him down indeed by a coward blow, not in fair hand-to-hand fight as is generally supposed.

Maupas paid the penalty anyway of his rashness, being instantly cut to pieces by the enraged Scots.

## CHAPTER VIII.

KING ART MACMURROUGH, THE DREAD OF  
THE PALE.

The death of the gallant, but ill-fated, Bruce ended an expedition, which, as Grant wrote, "had it been wisely managed, might have changed for ever the future history of the three kingdoms." Bruce's head was cut off and sent to the English King, who created Bermingham, with the main body of his clan to Tyrowen, and the Earl of Louth. Donald O'Neill managed to retreat remnant of Scots under John Thompson reached Carrickfergus, where they met King Robert of Scotland, who, true to his promise, landed with reinforcements a day or two after the fight. Depressed by his brother's death, King Robert returned to Scotland, carrying back with him the survivors of the ill-fated expedition.

Once more we have dreadful anarchy in the land, Anglo-Irish and Irish alternately fighting one another and among themselves, sowing the country with blood and tears, reaping the whirlwind with a vengeance as the fruits of their forefathers' mad behaviour, and still following in those forefathers' footsteps and continuing to sow the wind.

Edward III. of England, the warrior king, to do him justice, in order to pacify the Irish and allow himself



more freedom and men to prosecute his wars in France, certainly ordered that there should be one law for Irish and English. But that law was made practically a dead letter by the avaricious cunning officials of the English "Pale." "The Pale," it may be explained, was the name given to the territory within which English authority and laws held sway, the word "pale" meaning a boundary or limit. Compare paling, a fence. A statute, indeed, was framed at Kilkenny, by which the intermarriage of English and Irish was to be treated as high treason, and any Englishman, using the Irish language or dress, or in any way acting neighbourly to the Irish, should forfeit all his property and be imprisoned. The outcome of this most diabolical measure was that the Irish clans learned a little sense. If they did not band together and wage a regular war, they at least attacked the colonists separately on all sides. The O'Neills became paramount once more in Ulster; O'Farrell, Prince of Annaly or Leitrim, "in one triumphant foray, swept all trace of the foreigner out of his territories," and the MacMurroughs of Leinster, under their prince, carried their warfare up to the very gates of Dublin, redeeming their name gloriously from the stigma left upon it by their ancestor Dermot "the Traitor."

The career of Art MacMurrough, to which we have now come, is, indeed, one of the most romantic chapters in all the romantic history of Ireland. Art was elected King or Prince of his native province in 1375, when only eighteen, and he married Elizabeth Veele, the heiress to the barony of Norragh, an English lady of the Pale. She thus violated the above-mentioned Statute of Kilkenny,

and the English thereupon confiscated her lands in Kildare. The English Exchequer at the same time stopped payment to King Art of his "black rent"—an annual sum of 80 marks, which may be better remembered as "black mail," a tax paid to the Irish on the borders of the Pale in order that this might be protected by them.

The Pale at this time embraced Dublin, Louth, Meath, Kildare, Carlow, Wexford, and Waterford.

King Art promptly gathered an army and wasted Kildare, Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford, driving the English colonists terror-stricken into Dublin. Richard II., King of England, the son of the famous Black Prince, was now on the English throne. He was so much annoyed at the reports of the contumacy and success of King Art that he determined to visit Ireland in person and subdue the bold rebel himself.

Richard landed at Waterford in 1394, with a host of no less than 30,000 archers and 4,000 men-at-arms, and the flower of England's nobility in his train. Instead of at once tamely submitting before such tremendous odds, King Art anticipated him by swooping swiftly down upon the strong, walled town of New Ross, then an English settlement. With his allies, the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles of Wicklow, King Art stormed the place, "burned it with its houses and castles [and carried away gold, silver and hostages."

The English garrison within its walls had consisted of 1,200 with long bows,—then the most dreaded of English arms—1,200 pikemen, and 400 crossbowmen. When the King of England arrived

at the town, he found it a mass of smoking ruins, without food to supply his army.

King Art wheeled about and hung like a gadfly on the flanks of the mighty English host, cutting off foraging parties, enticing pursuit, or seeming to invite open battle, and then ambushing, entangling the foe in morasses and wild mountain defiles and forests, occasionally risking and daringly executing flank and rear attacks on the march, and surprise attacks in the night. The autumn storms, too, fought for the heroic Art. The English were buffeted by furious gales and rainstorms: while they could not procure a single article of food for men or horse. Art had swept the countryside bare. Completely out-matched, King Richard at last invited King Art to a personal interview in Dublin, which city the English monarch reached with his great host sadly thinned, bedraggled and crestfallen, humiliated as it had never dreamed of being by the despised "Irish enemy." Art agreed to a conference, and very foolishly and trustingly repaired to Dublin, and there met Richard. The King of England, after receiving him with honour, and every attention, had him arrested and thrown into prison on a charge of conspiracy, but thought better of his own treachery and released him again.

Richard agreed to continue the "black rent" to MacMurrough and restore his wife's property; and, after spending Christmas in sumptuous feasting in Dublin, and entertaining right royally MacMurrough and other Irish princes and chiefs, he returned to England "with much honour and small profit"

As Viceroy he left behind him Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, the next heir to his throne. Mortimer was induced by the crafty officials of the Pale to try and entrap King Art MacMurrough, to make a prisoner of him by treachery.

King Art was invited to a Norman border castle ; but, as he sat down to the feast, he caught the eye of his bard, who accompanied him. The bard had discovered the meditated treachery, and, striking his harp, sang in Gaelic a warning to his master. "The prince maintained a calm demeanour until, seizing a favourable pretext for reaching the yard, he sprang to horse, dashed through his foes and, sword in hand, hewed his way to freedom."

Justly incensed at this second act of perfidy, Art never trusted his Norman foes again. Once more he roused his clansmen and allies to battle. He stormed Carlow, a formidable fortress, and in the following year (1398), gave pitched battle to the English Viceroy or Deputy, Mortimer, at Kells in Kilkenny. There were some fifteen thousand men on either side, and the battle was a complete victory for the Irish, the English being routed, and Mortimer, the Lord Deputy, slain. Other victories in different parts of Ireland came thick and fast for the patriotic party, and "English power seemed tottering to its fall."

King Richard, once more alarmed, came again to Ireland, landing with a great host of 20,000 men at Waterford, as before, in 1399. Art MacMurrough, who only had 3,000 men, pursued his former guerilla tactics, harassing the advancing English in every conceivable way ; luring them into traps, and carrying off



all the food and fodder, so that they could find none to keep body and soul together. An enfeebled and famine-stricken multitude rather than an army, the English host, after eleven days' toilsome and fruitless march, reached the Wicklow coast, and were only saved from perishing to a man from sheer starvation by being met there by three ships laden with provisions.

Art, now deserted by some of his allies, who were overawed by the martial array of Richard's force, condescended to ask for a conference. "The news brought much joy to the English camp." De Spencer, the Earl of Gloucester, was appointed to meet him; but the conference came to nothing, Art proudly declining to treat unless he was allowed to hold his territory without any homage to the English King. A French knight, named Creton, who attended Gloucester at the conference, has described Art for us as "a fine large man, wondrously active. To look at him he seemed very stern and savage and a very able man. He had a horse without housing or saddle. . . . In coming down it galloped so hard that, in my opinion, I never saw hare, deer, or any other animal . . . run with such speed as it did. In his right hand he bore a great long dart, which he cast with much skill."

Richard swore that he would not leave Ireland until he had Art in his power; but though his army was now swollen, with the Anglo-Irish lords, to 30,000 splendidly appointed troops, he could not break or hunt down the Lion of Leinster; and presently he was obliged to break his rash oath and hurry back to England on tidings of Henry of Lancaster's



Strongbow

King Edward Bruce

Silken Thomas



insurrection and desire to depose him. He *was* deposed, as a matter of fact, and ended his days miserably, a prisoner in Pontefract Castle.

The new King, Henry IV. of England, did not trouble Ireland, and King Art relapsed into temporary quiescence, having wrung from the English Pale all his demands. John Drake, the Mayor of Dublin, attacked the O'Byrnes of Wicklow and defeated them, slaying 3,000 of their number. On account of this service to the English crown "permission was given to him and his successors in office to have a gilt sword carried before them, as was borne before the Mayor of London. A new Lord Deputy, Sir Stephen Scrope, determined to reduce King Art and marched against him in 1407. Art met him at Callan, and for a time was prevailing when reinforcements came up for the English, and the Irish were obliged to give way, the brave O'Nolan falling in trying to stem the tide of defeat.

Scrope, however, was unable to follow up his advantage and King Art was in no way dispirited or weakened by the reverse. He gathered another army and over-ran the English possessions, capturing castles and towns again in rapid succession, until, at the head of a large army, he encamped under the walls of Dublin itself. The English, under their Viceroy, Thomas Duke of Lancaster, marched out to drive away the insolent intruders upon their domains, and Art gave them battle at Kilmainham. Either force equalled some 10,000 men, and the fight was the Battle of Kells over again. Art signally defeated the Viceroy, who was carried back into Dublin severely



wounded, while his army was almost exterminated, the river Liffey at that point being subsequently called the "ford of slaughter," or *Athcroe*.

Why King Art did not now at once assault Dublin, it is hard to say, save that he was not equipped with siege engines. But in the demoralisation that must have prevailed within the city after such a defeat, a bold attack might have carried all before it. Still, as D'Alton says, "the Irish soldiers of that day fought well in the open, but had not learned to capture fortified towns." Moreover, Dublin "was well fortified, perhaps impossible to take from the land side, nor could the inhabitants be starved out, for the sea was open to them and the Irish had no vessels to blockade it."

King Art's closing years were peaceful for the most part, and in 1417 he died, in the sixtieth year of his age, after forty-two years' glorious reign over his people. From the fact that his chief brehon or judge, O'Doran, perished at the same time of similar strange symptoms, after partaking of a drink given them by a woman at the wayside, as they passed, it is believed he was poisoned by his enemies.

No braver soldier, no nobler character than King Art MacMurrough Kavanagh, illuminates the history of our native land. He ranks with Owen Roe O'Neill and Sarsfield, and in an age of detestable factionism and petty jealousies, to his greater glory be it said, "he never turned in anger on a brother Irishman." The Four Masters speak of him in terms of lavish praise, too, as the founder of churches and monasteries by his bounties and contributions, and for his hospitality and knowledge.

## PART III.

### THE GERALDINES.

Alas for my love—my royal love—

Of the golden long ago !

For gone are all her warrior bands,

And rusted are her battle brands,

And broken her sabre bright and keen,

And torn her robe of radiant green,

A slave where she was stainless queen,

My loyal love—my royal love—

Of the golden long ago.

'A Royal Love,' by EDMUND LEAMY, <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>M.P.



## CHAPTER IX.

## SILKEN THOMAS.

The brief three years' success of the Bruces in Ireland had so alarmed the English monarch for the safety of his possessions there that he had, in order to retain the allegiance of the most powerful of the Anglo-Irish barons, created James Butler, Earl of Ormond, and Maurice Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond, and these two great chiefs were made Earls Palatine over Tipperary and Kerry respectively. Within their palatinates these two families of the Butlers and Fitzgeralds, or Geraldines, as the latter came to be called affectionately by the people, were practically kings in their own right, "they could make peace or war at will, create barons and knights, erect courts for the trial of civil and criminal causes, appoint sheriffs and judges; the king's officers had no authority." (Murphy).

The deposition of Richard II., and the seizure of the English crown by the usurper Henry IV., surnamed of Bolingbroke, where he was born, led to the fearful Wars of the Roses, or Yorkists and Lancastrians, which devastated England for many years. In this fratricidal strife, the Butlers took the Lancastrian or



Red Rose side, and the Geraldines, the Yorkist or White Rose side, and the mass of the Irish people, though little interested really in the struggle, took the Yorkist side also ; in the first place, because they considered that a descendant of Richard II. was more entitled to the crown than the descendant of the usurper ; and, in the second place, out of love for the claimant himself, Richard Duke of York, who was appointed Lord Lieutenant or Viceroy in 1449, and endeared himself to the hearts of all, native Irish as well as Anglo-Irish, if not the crafty grasping officials of the Pale, by his humanity and conciliatory, kindly acts.

Unfortunately, perhaps, for both England and Ireland, this great and truly noble man perished in an early part of the war that his claim to the English throne engendered. Had he lived and won the English crown, how different things might have been in both lands ! The Butlers and Geraldines flew to arms for their respective roses, and they met in battle at Pilltown in Kilkenny, where the Butlers were defeated. The House of York temporarily triumphed, too, in England, and the Geraldines were in the ascendancy ; and Ireland enjoyed a certain amount of peace and quietness, for York's son, now Edward IV. as also Richard III. (Crookback) the youngest son of that noble house, had warm corners in their hearts for the land that had befriended their father and their cause.

So amicable was now the understanding between the natives and English that the Statute of Kilkenny was a dead letter. English barons and nobles married

Irish wives and adopted the Irish dress, and, as Thomas Davis wrote :

“ Not often had their children been by Irish mothers  
nursed,  
When from their full and generous hearts an Irish  
feeling burst.”

Now, indeed, did the Geraldines become, as the saying is, “ more Irish than the Irish themselves.” Thomas, the Eighth Earl of Desmond, was made Lord Deputy in 1463, and won the good opinions of all except the Lancastrian wire pullers, who contrived to ruin him. The ultimate triumph of the Lancastrians, or Red Rose party, by the defeat and death of Crookback Richard at the battle of Bosworth, led to the decline of the power of the Geraldines and the rise of that of their hereditary foes, the Butlers or Ormonds.

The new Lancastrian King of England, however, Henry VII., feared to at once displace the Geraldines, and so continued Gerald Fitzgerald, Eighth Earl of Kildare—he belonged to another branch of the family, distinct from the Desmonds—as Deputy. This Gerald was known as “ the Great Earl.” His brother was Chancellor and his father-in-law Treasurer. At this time, owing to the lapse of the Statute of Kilkenny and the frequent intermarriage and better understanding existing between the native Irish and the Anglo-Irish, the actual English Pale had dwindled to little more than the county of Dublin and a portion of Meath and Louth. The English colonists in all other parts of the country were known as “ the Degenerate

English," because they had suffered themselves to become absorbed by, or subject to, the native tribes.

In fact, the Fitzgeralds and Butlers were now practically Irish tribes. Had the Reformation not come there can be no doubt that before much longer the Irish and Anglo-Irish would have formed one race, like the Normans and Saxons did, and possibly have broken away from England completely.

Henry VII. was only waiting for the chance to break the power of the Geraldines in Ireland, and the Deputy now played into his hands by receiving and crowning Lambert Simnel, a Yorkist claimant, as the rightful king of England. An Irish army was sent to England with the Pretender, led by Lords Thomas and Maurice Fitzgerald. The king's army defeated them at Stoke-on-Trent, and the Pretender was made a scullion in the royal kitchen.

Still the politic and rather cowardly Henry continued Kildare as Deputy, with the result that the Earl of Desmond supported a second impostor, Perkin Warbeck, but subsequently dropped him. Kildare held aloof, but Henry was now determined to change the order of things. He sent over Sir Edward Poynings as Lord Deputy, deposing Kildare. Poynings assembled a parliament at Drogheda and passed the famous "Poynings' Law," which confirmed the infamous Statute of Kilkenny, and reduced all parliaments in Ireland to mere mouthpieces of England. They could make no laws unless the English King and his Privy Council had approved them.

Henry VII. was succeeded on the throne of England by Henry VIII, the Bluebeard of history. His

father had reinstated the Geraldines in power, and Garret Oge, the Ninth Earl of Kildare, was Lord Deputy. His enemies, the Butlers, engineered matters so well at Westminster that he was summoned thither by the King to answer various charges, amongst others a breach of the Statute of Kilkenny by marrying his two daughters to the Irish chiefs of Offaly and Ely and the wasting of the lands of the Butlers.

Ere going, he appointed his eldest son, Lord Thomas, as his Deputy. Lord Thomas was a young man of 21, and was called from his love of rich attire, "Silken Thomas." A rumour reached the ears of this young man that his father had been beheaded. Inflamed with anger, he at once proceeded to the Council Chamber, accompanied by some of his grief-stricken kinsmen, his guards and retainers. The council was sitting in St. Mary's Abbey, Dublin. Lord Thomas was in his robes of state, and before him marched the mace-bearer with symbol of office, and the sword of state in a rich scabbard of velvet, carried by its proper officer. It was the 11th of June, 1534.

"Way for the Lord Deputy!" And into the midst of the Council stalked Lord Thomas with a stern-set face, compressed lips, and gloomy, flashing eyes.

"Keep your seats, my lords," he cried in Irish, as all rose at his entrance. "I have come hither, not to preside over this council, but to tell you of the dastard deed that hath been done in London, my noble father's murder, base and cruel murder. My lords, this sword of state is yours, not mine. I received it with an oath and have used it to your benefit. Now I have need of



mine own sword which I dare to trust. This common sword flatters me with a golden scabbard, but it hath in it a pestilent edge. I return it to you, and you must save yourselves from me and mine as open enemies henceforth. I am no longer Henry's Deputy ; I am his foe ; and if all the hearts of England and Ireland that have cause to would join in this quarrel, as I trust they will, then shall he be a byword, as I trust he shall, for his heresy, lust and tyranny, for which certainly the age to come will pronounce him a prince of the most abominable and hateful memory. I hereby cast off all duty and allegiance to your master."

With that he flung the sword of state upon the council-table, and likewise flung off his robes of office, tossing them to his feet. His followers shouted the old war-cry of the Kildare Geraldines, "Croom Aboo!"—"Croom, a strong castle of the family, to victory"—and also "Righ Thomas go bragh!" ("King Thomas for ever!")

The shouts were taken up by the whole of the Geraldine train within and without the chamber and abbey, to the horror of the Councillors, and Lord Thomas's bard, Neale Roe O'Kennedy, struck up an Irish battle chant, to the stirring strains of which Silken Thomas and his followers strode from the place, unheeding the entreaties of Archbishop Cromer of Armagh, one of the Council, to forbear from thus rushing heedlessly to his doom.

Young Lord Thomas, or "Silken Thomas," as we prefer to call him, was quickly at the head of a combined army of the Irish and Anglo-Irish. He forthwith attacked Dublin, displaying a vigour and determination, for all his headstrong, impetuous behaviour, that other

rebels had lacked. A plague was ravaging the city and its resistance was feeble. He captured it, but the castle held out against him. Archbishop Allen, one of Henry's creatures, fled by ship, but the vessel ran ashore at Clontarf. The Archbishop was captured by Kildare's men, and brought before him at Artane.

"Remove the churl," he cried contemptuously, when the Archbishop pleaded for his life and liberty, and the words were taken to mean murder. The Archbishop was promptly slaughtered.

This foul deed was Silken Thomas's undoing, for it estranged from him all the nobler spirits among the Anglo-Irish lords and Irish chiefs. The Dublin citizens, too, shut their gates upon him on his return from harrying the lands of the hated Butlers or Ormondists, and he was unable to force an entry again. He applied to the Pope and the Emperor Charles V. for aid, but the Pope excommunicated him for his alleged complicity in the murder of Archbishop Allen, and this, with the discovery that his father, Garret Oge, had not been executed at all, caused many of his allies to fall away.

The English garrison at Dublin was reinforced by fresh troops under the new Deputy Sir William Skeffington, who, however, was an old man and very incapable. The rebellion dragged out until March, 1535, the Butlers and the Pale keeping Silken Thomas and his followers engaged alternately, by ravaging his lands of Kildare.

Maynooth Castle was Lord Thomas's great stronghold, and it was considered impregnable, so that he only left within it a garrison of 100 men, of whom 60 were

gunners. Skeffington besieged it with heavy ordnance never before seen in Ireland. On the third day of the siege the north-west wall of the donjon, or keep, was brought down, burying the cannon on that side under its ruins. The besiegers, however, were not able, for all their vastly superior numbers, to effect an entry into the place until five more days had passed, when, in the final assault, sixty of the garrison fell. The remaining thirty-seven were then taken prisoners, and condemned to death.

Lord Grey was now made Deputy in place of the incompetent Skeffington; and shortly after Lord Thomas surrendered on condition that his life was spared. He was sent to England and confined in the Tower of London. The King was wroth at his life being spared, and the Butlers also; and, in 1537, the foolish but heroic Silken Thomas was executed at Tyburn, along with his five uncles who "had taken no part in the rising," and three of whom had actually opposed him.

## CHAPTER X.

## SHANE THE PROUD.

The sole survivor of the great and noble house of the Geraldines was now a boy of twelve years of age, and the English Government sought to lay hands on him also, clearly with the design of extirpating the family. But he had staunch friends who concealed him. First he was hidden by O'Brien of Thomond, who passed him on to his aunt in Cork, Lady Eleanor MacCarthy. She was on the point of being married to Manus O'Donnell, Chief of Tyrconnell, and smuggled him to the North with her.

Henry VIII. offered rewards for his capture, but the Geraldines were now regarded on all sides as Irish of the Irish, and not only did the Irish chiefs shelter and befriend the hunted lad, they formed a league—the "First Geraldine League"—to protect him and restore him to his father's estates. This League included the O'Neills, O'Donnells, O'Briens, the Desmonds, O'Connor of Offaly, O'Carrolls, and the chiefs of Moylurg and Breffny. To ensure his personal safety he was assigned a bodyguard of 24 horse-men, who accompanied him wheresoever he went! After two years he was put on a vessel bound for St. Malo, disguised as a peasant, and, accompanied by his faithful



tutor, Father Leverus, made his way to Rome. There his kinsman, Cardinal Pole, educated him as befitted his rank, and in the reign of Queen Mary, Gerald Fitzgerald returned from his exile, recovered his birthright, and became Earl of Kildare.

Henry VIII. had thrown over allegiance to the See of Rome and taken the title of "Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England." He desired to have the same authority in Ireland. An "Act of Supremacy," similar to the English one was rushed through a Parliament summoned in Dublin in 1536, but for the most part the Act was a dead letter, Irish and Anglo-Irish alike in the great mass remaining firm adherents of the Roman Pontiff, and although bishops were supplanted and monasteries destroyed by the King's troops, it was not until Elizabeth's reign that anything like real persecution set in.

Con O'Neill, the head of the clan, had been created "Earl of Tyrone" by Henry VIII., but his son Shaun or John, famous as "Shane the Proud," contemptuously flung aside the Saxon honour of "Earl," and denied his father's right to thus barter away or surrender the lands of the tribe to the English Crown. He proudly received at the hands of his clan the title of The O'Neill, thrusting aside his elder but illegitimate brother Matthew, who had been created "Baron of Dungannon" by the English monarch, and made heir to the earldom.

Matthew, the King's O'Neill, sought the aid of the English government to establish his claim. The Deputy who was the Earl of Sussex, readily responded to the request, and invaded Ulster. Shane defeated him and his ally in no less than three battles.

The great stain on Shane's escutcheon is his inexcusable treatment of Calvagh O'Donnell. He carried off this chief's wife, and, by many other lawless acts, made enemies for himself in his own camp, among those who had at first been his stoutest allies, such as the Antrim Scots and the O'Reillys.

Sir Henry Sidney, Deputy for Sussex, entered into a parley with Shane, and agreed, on condition of a cessation of hostilities against the Pale, to lay the Irish Chief's grievances before Queen Elizabeth herself. The Queen first acceded to Shane's demands, but subsequently changed her mind, and directed Sussex to put forth the utmost efforts to crush him. Shane met the Viceroy's troops near Armagh. The Irish chief had but 120 horse and a few Scots and gallowlasses with him, "scarce half in numbers" that of the English army, yet he boldly charged this, and "by the cowardice of one wretch (Wingfield) was like, in one hour, to have left not one man of that army alive, and after to have taken me and the rest at Armagh," to quote Sussex's own despatch.

Shane, after this victory, entered and ravaged the Pale from end to end. My Lord Sussex "bargained with one of Shane's servants, Neal Grey, to assassinate him, but the plot miscarried. The Viceroy openly avowed to the Queen what he had tried to do, nor did he receive any reprimand." (D'Alton.) By the Queen's special command, the Earl of Kildare next went to the recalcitrant Irishman, and induced him to go to England to see Queen Elizabeth. The fearless Northern Chief trusted to the honour of Kildare, and went, on the understanding that no attack was to be made on

his territory in his absence, and his personal safety going and coming was to be guaranteed.

On the 6th of January, 1562, therefore, he went to London, and was received by Elizabeth with all honour. According to John Mitchel, he took with him "a gallant train of guards, bareheaded with curled hair (as if the Statute of Kilkenny had never been passed) hanging down their shoulders, armed with battle-axes and arrayed in their saffron doublets—an astonishment to the worthy burghers of London and Westminster." Shane comported himself at the English court with great dignity and such a haughty bearing that a courtier described him as "O'Neill the Great, cousin of St. Patrick, friend to the Queen of England, enemy to all the world besides." Elizabeth, probably attracted by his handsome person, gave him assurances of her royal support, and confirmed him in the title of The O'Neill.

He returned to Ireland, but found the English soldiers occupying Armagh and a new Earl of Tyrone set up against him. Shane thereupon threw over the conditions the Queen had imposed upon him, and which necessity alone had made him accept. He ravaged the lands of those Irish chiefs who had submitted to English authority, while still maintaining a pretended friendship with the Viceroy.

That wily statesman, unable to cope with him in the field, sent him a present of wine. The wine was found to be poisoned, the Northern Chief and those of his followers who drank some of it being taken seriously ill. Shane now built a castle on the shore of Lough Neagh, which he called Fuith na Gaill, or "Hatred of the English," and he forbade anyone to speak English



Silken Thomas resigning his post as Deputy





in his presence. It is said he even hanged a man whom he saw eating an English biscuit. He now turned on the English wholeheartedly, attacked Dundalk, captured Newry and Dundrum, and, entering Connaught, demanded tribute from the Earl of Clanricarde. In his own territory the Brehon law "was executed with vigour," and such was the security within it that many quitted the Pale to live under his rule." (D'Alton.)

In 1567, having invaded Tyrconnell, he was attacked by the O'Donnells on the shores of Lough Swilly, near Letterkenny. He was completely defeated, numbers of his men perishing in the river Swilly in the rout. Something like 3,000 of his clan fell in that disastrous conflict, and Shane fled, temporarily bereft of his reason with unavailing rage and despair. He foolishly took refuge among the MacDonnells or Antrim Scots, whom he had treated as harshly as the O'Donnells. Received at first with every symptom of cordiality, as he was sitting down to the banquet he was set upon and simply "hacked to pieces," his head being preserved and sent to the Lord Deputy by one Captain Piers, an Englishman, to obtain the reward of 1,000 marks that had been offered for it.

In the words of John Savage :

"He was 'turbulent' with traitors—he was haughty with the foe—

He was 'cruel' say ye, Saxons? Ay! he dealt ye blow for blow!

He was 'rough' and 'wild,' and who's not wild to see his hearthstone razed?

He was 'merciless as fire'—ay, ye kindled him—he blazed!

He was 'proud'; yes, proud of birthright, and because he flung  
away

Your Saxon stars of pryncedom, as the rock does mocking  
spray.

He was wild, insane for vengeance—ay, and preached it till  
Tyrone

Was ruddy, ready, wild too, with 'Red Hands to clutch their  
own.' "

## CHAPTER XI.

GRANUA UAILE.—GLENMALURE.—THE FALL OF THE  
GERALDINES.

While a woman wielded the sceptre of power in England, another was doing so at this period in County Mayo. This was the renowned Granua Uaile, or, as the English called her, Grace O'Malley. She "ruled triumphant over the whole western coast, and was able to defeat, in a naval battle, the sheriff of Galway and all his forces, off her castle" of Carrigahooly. The last warrior queen of Erin, she maintained a fleet of ships and warred with her enemies both by sea and land.

Her father was Dubdaire O'Malley, the Chief of the Baronies of Murrisk and Burrishoole, the country all round Clew Bay. At an early age she had "acquired that passionate love of the sea, as well as that skill and courage in seafaring, which made her at once the idol of her clansmen and the greatest captain in the Western seas." (Dr. Healy.) All the O'Malleys had been sailors from time immemorial, and she in her girlhood frequently accompanied her father and his sept on naval excursions. She married, first, Donal O'Flaherty; and with regard to the O'Flahertys, the people of Galway's fervent prayer was, "From the ferocious O'Flahertys, Good Lord deliver us." This prayer is



inscribed over the west gate of Galway. Donal was the Prince of Iar-Connaught, the Chief Lord of all Connemara, and so it was a worthy match.

Granua's chief fortress was a castle on Clare Island, where was mooring for her larger ships. Her smaller craft were kept at Carrigahooly, where she had another stronghold and usually resided. A hole was to be seen in the ruined seawall of her chamber through which a cable was passed from her own ship to her bedpost, so that she might be apprised of any sudden alarm.

Upon her galleys and bigger ships she flew the sea-horse of O'Malley or O'Melia, as the name is often pronounced in those parts, and the lions of O'Flaherty.

The young sea-queen went to reside with her husband at Bunowan Castle, his chief seat, but they did not long enjoy their married life. Donal was killed in battle, and shortly afterwards her eldest son Owen was basely and treacherously murdered by Sir Richard Bingham. Granua took refuge with her other children in Clare Island, and one of her daughters married Richard Burke, whom the English called by the terrible name of "the Devil's Hook," an attempt at translating his Irish *sobriquet* of "the Demon of the Hook," or Promontory of Corraun. From Clare Island, Grace now descended with her galleys upon various parts of the coast, committing numerous piracies in revenge for the murder of her son. The Devil's Hook backed her up well on land, and five hundred pounds reward was offered for her capture; and soldiers were sent to storm Carrigahooly. They were driven back, with loss, to Galway, after besieging the castle for about a fortnight!

Granua now seized the Castle of Doona by stratagem, whereupon the English made peace with her; and she married another Burke and chief of the Clan-William, called Iron Richard, or "Richard of Iron," because he always wore a coat of mail. In 1576, Sir Henry Sidney, the Deputy, visited Galway, and the corsair queen, with her iron-clad husband, went to see him. She offered her services "to me wherever I would command her," related Sidney, "with three galleys and 200 fighting men, either in Ireland or in Scotland." Sidney knighted Iron Richard, so that Granua became Lady Burke.

Granua had more than three galleys, each capable of carrying 60 or 70 fighting men, with thirty oarsmen to propel them. She built her ships of the oak of the Murrisk woods. Not long did she remain at peace with the English. Resuming her piratical expeditions, she was captured on one by the Earl of Desmond, near Tarbert, on the Shannon. She was released by the Deputy, and later obtained her husband's pardon also. Iron Richard died, and she was deprived of his lands, whereupon she set sail in her fleet from Clare Island to England, to visit the Queen of England and obtain redress. On the voyage she had a posthumous son whom she named "Tibbot of the Ship."

She reached London in August, 1593, and it is said that she was in nowise dazzled by the splendour of her sister queen's court. Elizabeth received her courteously, and made her son an Earl, and from him the Viscounts Mayo are descended. Granua was about sixty at the time. On her return to Ireland, she landed at Howth and sought hospitality at the castle.

She was refused it, whereupon she carried off the young heir of Howth, who was taking the air with his nurse in the grounds, to her galley and made all sail for Clew Bay. Lord Howth was forced, in order to recover his son, to promise to keep open house in future at dinner time.

Grace died at peace with all her neighbours, after her eventful and stormy life, and was buried on Clare Island.

Meanwhile, to resist the change of religion, a second Geraldine League had been formed, and the head of the family, Sir James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald obtained a Bull from Pope Gregory XIII., stimulating the Irish to fight for their national freedom and the old faith. Gregory also fitted out four ships and put it under the command of an English adventurer, Thomas Stukeley. Stukeley sailed, but not to Ireland. He carried his fleet to the support of the King of Portugal and fought for that monarch against the Moors, falling with him in battle.

Fitzmaurice fled to the continent and obtained some Spanish help. He landed with his Spanish allies at Smerwick in County Kerry, and entrenched himself in the fortress of Dunanore. There 200 of the O'Flahertys joined him by sea from Connaught; but his relative, the Earl of Desmond, was too pusillanimous to rally to his succour, and the rebels had to disperse. The gallant Fitzmaurice with a few men was making for the Galtees when, near Limerick, they borrowed some horses of their kinsmen, the Burkes of Clanwilliam, without consulting the owners.

These fiercely pursued them. Sir James, it is said,

attempted to explain matters, but they would not listen, and shot him, wounding him mortally. The heroic Geraldine dashed at the wretched factionists, and with two swift strokes of his trusty blade, slew the two young Burkes, then fell dead from his own cruel wound.

The father of the Burkes was created Baron of Castleconnell by Queen Elizabeth for this service by his sons, and their widows were pensioned.

John Fitzgerald, the brother of the Earl of Desmond, now took command of the little band of patriots, and finding himself pursued by the Deputy Drury, he turned at bay, became in his turn the assailant and defeated the English, who lost 300 men, at Springfield, near Limerick. Shortly after though, Drury's successor, Malby, encountered the victors, and completely routed them at Croom.

Desmond himself now could no longer hesitate. Beset on all sides with difficulties, faced with the necessity of either conforming to the new religion and betraying his relatives and co-religionists or of throwing in his lot with them, he chose the latter, decidedly the nobler part. He joined the league and became its leader although he was wholly unfitted by his pusillanimity for a military commander. He won one or two victories, it is true, or those under him did, but the Deputy took his two chief strongholds, Askeaton and Carrickfoyle.

Viscount Baltinglass, however, had revolted within the Pale, inspired by Desmond's tardy action, and allied himself with the unconquerable Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne, the great Wicklow Chief, who was struggling for an independent Ireland all through his life, and



was the friend of every friend of his country, the foe of its every foe. Lord Grey de Wilton, the Deputy, thought it a favourable chance to wipe out this recalcitrant clan of the O'Byrnes, and led a powerful army into Wicklow, anticipating an easy victory in his overweening conceit.

Deep into the mountainous fastnesses of Glenmalur the English pushed, although the heavy guns had to be left behind and cavalry could not act on account of the boggy nature of the ground here, its rocky nature there. No sign of the "Irish enemy" was to be seen, and the march was slow and painful on account of the difficulties of the defile. The sides of this became densely wooded, and suddenly the vanguard found its progress barred by felled trees with the branches facing it, presenting a perfect *chevaux-de-frise* that would have to be hacked through with axes.

Simultaneously a close and deadly fire of musketry was opened upon them from the woods on either hand. Men fell rapidly under the leaden storm; all was confusion in an instant, and out from their cover poured the Irish with ringing shouts of "O'Byrne aboo!" and "O'Toole aboo!"—for the two clans were always practically as one, ever staunch allies. With spear, and sword, and battle-axe, they completed the rout.

Sir Francis Cosby, the infamous perpetrator of the Massacre of Mullaghmast, which, true to our intention of avoiding the horrible, we have not otherwise mentioned, was amongst the slain, along with Carew, Moore, Audley, and other distinguished officers; and 800 rank and file perished. The Deputy saved himself by the speed of his horse, and the O'Byrnes and

O'Tooles plundered the Pale up to the very gates of Dublin.

Once again might this stronghold have fallen if there had been an energetic and competent man at the head of the rebellion, instead of the vacillating, timid Desmond, and the equally incapable Baltinglass.

The lion-hearted Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne was thereafter called the "Firebrand of the Mountains." He burned with impunity the town of Rathcoole, only half a dozen miles from the capital.

The Desmond Rebellion dragged on. Ormond and Pelham, the New Deputy, had now, however, reduced the Geraldine strongholds everywhere, and the great victory of Glenmalure was but the last flicker of the dying embers as it were. Nevertheless, a more resolute commander-in-chief might have turned it to good account, particularly as immediately after it, four ships came into Smerwick Harbour with 800 Spaniards and Italians to help the cause, with 5,000 stand of arms and a large sum of money. They fortified Dunanore, but were left to fight alone, and Lord Grey de Wilton had time to march from Dublin and wipe out his defeat at Glenmalure by besieging and reducing the fortress. Life and liberty were guaranteed to the Spaniards if they laid down their arms, and, as Charles Kingsley tells us in his "Westward Ho!" on doing so they were butchered to a man by such gentlemen of light and learning—such great men of Elizabeth's time—as Sir Walter Raleigh and the poet Edmond Spenser.

The Spanish commander was spared, and afterwards degraded by his countrymen for cowardice, and certainly he might have done something more than shut himself

up in a fort and wait for his foes to come and blockade him.

The aged Earl of Desmond was now a hunted outlaw. Driven from the woods of Aherlow, where he lay hidden for a time, he took some cattle at Tralee from a chief named Moriarty, who, as usual, thereupon had to become a traitor to his country's cause and pursue the poor hunted old man to his death. The factionists, bursting into the hovel where the Earl lay, hewed him to death.

This ended the Geraldine rising ; 600,000 acres of the Desmond lands were confiscated, and an attempt was made to people them with English settlers, named "Undertakers." But the attempt failed, English settlers would not come, so that the Irish still remained in possession of the land, if not of the loaves and fishes. Still, "the might of the noble race of the Southern Geraldines was extinguished for ever."

Yet, as Thomas Davis wrote :

"True Geraldines, brave Geraldines, as torrents mould  
the earth,  
You channelled deep Old Ireland's heart by constancy  
and worth."

A previous Earl Desmond, defeated and taken prisoner by his hereditary foes the Butlers, was being borne from the field of battle on a litter supported on the shoulders of some of his captors, for he was badly wounded, when one of the young Butlers, riding up alongside him, tauntingly asked :

"Where is now the proud Earl of Desmond ? "

"Where he ought to be—with his heel upon the necks of the Butlers," was the excellent, if cutting, reply.

## PART IV.

### THE TWO HUGHS.

Proudly the note of the trumpet is sounding,  
Loudly the war-cries arise on the gale ;  
Fleetly the steed by Lough Swilly is bounding,  
To join the thick squadrons on Saimer's green vale.  
On, every mountaineer,  
Stranger to flight or fear,  
Rush to the standard of dauntless Red Hugh !  
Bonnaght and gallowglass,  
Throng from each mountain pass,  
On for old Erin ! O'Donnell aboo !

“ O'Donnell Aboo ! ” by M. J. McCANN.





## CHAPTER XII.

## THE KIDNAPPING OF RED HUGH O'DONNELL.

It was a pleasant day in summer, 1587, when a small ship sailed into Lough Swilly and anchored off Rathmullen. She flew the English ensign, and the captain announced that he had come to sell some rare Spanish wines he had. At Rathmullen dwelt MacSweeney "of the Battle-axes," with whom in fosterage, according to the old Irish custom, was the heir and hope of the great O'Donnell clan of Tyrconnell, young Hugh Roe O'Donnell, more familiarly and affectionately known in Irish history as "Red Hugh," on account of his fresh ruddy complexion.

He was a lad of fifteen at the time. Along with his foster-father he was invited aboard to inspect the wines, and unsuspectingly the pair descended to the cabin with the captain. The door was at once locked upon them, the hatches battened down and the ship set sail, their bereft relations and friends ashore being unable to pursue for lack of a vessel.

It was a clever device of the Lord Deputy, Sir John Perrott, to kidnap the young prince of Tyrconnell, and hold him as a hostage for the good behaviour of his clan.

The ship took the helpless lad and his fellow-prisoner to Dublin, where they were confined without hope of release.

In the following year, 1588, occurred the invasion of the famous Spanish Armada—the great fleet fitted out by King Philip of Spain to conquer England. A terrific gale fought England's battle better than she could have done herself. The mighty floating fortresses of Spain were scattered and driven, some round the Scottish coast, others round the Irish. For the most part the Irish chiefs befriended the ship-wrecked Spaniards at the risk of bringing the wrath of the English on their heads. A few factionists, of course, butchered the hapless poor wretches, or surrendered them to the tender mercies of the English governors, for the sake of ingratiating themselves with these.

No one perhaps in Ireland did more to help the distressed Spaniards than the Earl of Tyrone, Hugh O'Neill, the head of the great clan of that name. He had been brought up at Elizabeth's court; was a most loyal subject of England, and had fought against the Spaniards at Smerwick. Yet now he was suspected of succouring England's enemies and even of conspiring with the King of Spain by means of the Spanish sailors he had assisted.

He was most indignant at the accusation and journeyed to London to vindicate his loyalty to Elizabeth, who, as before, was charmed with his handsome person and suave tongue. He returned to Ireland with permission to arm and drill several thousands of soldiers; but the Queen did not give him permission to roof all his houses at Dungannon

with lead, nor suspect the reason of his so doing. That lead came in very useful for making bullets and cannon-balls later on, as the wily Earl intended it should.

Two more years went by, during which the O'Neills were brought to a high pitch of military discipline. For the purpose of fighting against the Queen's enemies? We shall see.

Hugh O'Neill was making friends everywhere, among the Irish chiefs particularly. He killed for ever the bitter feud that had so long existed between the O'Neills and O'Donnells by marrying the daughter of Sir Hugh O'Donnell, Red Hugh's father. It was only natural, too, that he should plead with the royal favourite Leicester for his young brother-in-law, Red Hugh's release. Leicester died without being able to effect it, but in the winter of 1590, through the secret agency of Hugh O'Neill, Red Hugh, now eighteen years of age, succeeded in escaping from Dublin castle with two of his fellow-prisoners. A rope had been smuggled in to them, thanks to O'Neill's gold and a venal gaoler, and by means of this rope they lowered themselves from a window. They were met outside the castle walls by friends with swift horses; but they were missed and pursued.

Red Hugh and his friends managed to reach the foot hills of Wicklow, where they meant to take refuge with the "Firebrand of the Mountain," stout-hearted Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne, the Victor of Glenmalure, still as ever in rebellion. They were unable to do so through the exigencies of the weather, and were forced to seek shelter with the O'Tooles. These, fearing the



wrath of the Deputy, arrested him and delivered him up to his pursuers.

The young prince was now loaded with fetters ; but Hugh O'Neill was not baffled. He employed his gold and subtlety once more to effect his young namesake's escape a second time. On Christmas Night, a year later, a file was passed in to Red Hugh, with which he cut through the irons ; then, with two young companions, the sons of Shane the Proud, Art and Henry O'Neill, he let himself down a silken rope, which had been wrapped round the file, into a sewer that passed out under the Castle wall into the ditch.

A faithful follower of O'Neill, Turlogh Boy O'Hagan, was waiting for them, and Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne was also in the secret this time. O'Neill had not taken the Wicklow Chief into his confidence before, knowing well that he would succour anyone escaping from Dublin Castle and fearing correspondence might be intercepted. The fugitives made for Ballinacor where O'Byrne lay, but the night was pitch dark, snow or sleet was falling, and in some way they missed and passed the spies that the Wicklow Chieftain had sent forward to meet them.

Red Hugh and the two young O'Neills were ill-clad, having left behind in the ditch their outer garments which they had soiled in the passage of the foul sewer. They felt the cold intensely, and, through missing O'Byrne's men, had to tramp through the wet snow on foot. In the darkness, outside the walls of the city, probably while looking for O'Byrne's clansmen, they lost Henry O'Neill, and this depressed them more than their sufferings.

Knowing that delay was dangerous, the others pushed on all that night and the following day, until they were quite exhausted. The snow fell fast and they had no food with them. Moreover, Art O'Neill had hurt himself by falling from the rope into the sewer. Red Hugh and O'Hagan had to carry him between them, and at length the two youths sank down, utterly worn out, under a rock not far from O'Byrne's stronghold. Leaving them there, O'Hagan went forward, buffeted by the storm, and, reaching Ballinacor, brought the brave Fiach MacHugh and his followers trooping back with him to the rescue.

They were in time to save the life of Red Hugh, but poor Art O'Neill had succumbed to the intense cold. They buried him there under the rock, and carried the hope of the O'Donnells back with all speed to Ballinacor, where he was safe from pursuit. Red Hugh remained in that secure retreat until arrangements could be made to send him to his own people.

In spite of all the watches the Lord Deputy set on the road and the spies the Government employed, Red Hugh O'Donnell regained the home of his people, and was promptly inaugurated chief of the clan on the rock of Kilmacrenan, his father, an old man, retiring in his favour.

Henry O'Neill had not been recaptured, but had met the clansmen of O'Byrne looking for them, so that he too was enabled to reach his northern home. It is amusing to read that on his arrival there Hugh O'Neill, in order to still further throw dust into English eyes, pretended to arrest him and throw him into prison. Hugh did not keep him there though, and his con-

finement, brief as it was, was also by no means irksome, we trow.

Smarting with resentment at his treatment, Red Hugh O'Donnell listened eagerly to the proposals of the wily O'Neill. These proposals were a league between their two great clans, indeed between every clan that would come in, for the freedom of their country for ever from the English yoke. The Maguires of Fermanagh, the O'Rourkes of Breffny, and the MacMahons, were also approached and readily joined the secret confederacy.

Red Hugh and Maguire struck at once. They laid siege to Enniskillen Castle, which had been taken from Maguire and garrisoned by the English. The garrison was soon in sore straits for food, and a relieving force was despatched from Connaught by Bingham, the governor of that province. The fiery O'Donnell had gone elsewhere to carry the war, but Maguire was reinforced by Cormac O'Neill, Tyrone's brother. They intercepted the relieving force at a ford and cut it to pieces, and the place was afterwards called the "Ford of the Biscuits," as the English lost all their food supplies, which included an immense quantity of biscuits.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## CLONTIBRET AND THE YELLOW FORD.

Hugh O'Neill, though his brother was in rebellion, was still feigning loyalty. His wife, Red Hugh's sister, had died, and he now met at Newry Castle a beautiful English lady named Mabel Bagnal, the sister of Sir Henry Bagnal, Chief Marshal of Ireland. He fell in love with her, but the Marshal did all in his power to prevent the match. Mabel Bagnal was a sweet and gracious maiden, and she reciprocated the love of the manly, noble-looking Irish earl. Friends aided her to escape the vigilance of her gloomy-browed brother, and the lovers met in secret, plighted their troth, and finally eloped and were married. Enraged beyond measure at this, Sir Henry Bagnal was ever afterwards Hugh O'Neill's bitter enemy, although they were now brothers-in-law, and remained deaf to all the gentle Mabel's attempts at reconciliation. He was so bitter a foe that he strove his utmost, by fair means and foul, to effect O'Neill's ruin, going so far as "trying to murder him." On this the devoted wife threw aside all sisterly affection and helped her husband in his plans for the overthrow of her own race in the land of her adoption.



Red Hugh meanwhile had penetrated to Annaly, the principedom of the O'Farrells—Longford as it is to-day—and with the remnant of that clan was driving the English before him. O'Neill now threw aside the cloak of pretence and hypocrisy, and early in 1595 swept Cavan, while his brother, Art, attacked and captured Portmore on the Blackwater, clearing Tyrone of all English.

The two Hughs, now openly leagued in arms against England, despatched letters to Spain and the Pope, begging assistance in arms and men, as they were fighting for the Catholic faith as well as nationality. Monaghan was next assailed, and Sir Henry Bagnal, O'Neill's implacable foe, marched to relieve it with 1,800 men. O'Neill suffered him to do so, then attacked him as he was returning home and slew 200 of his troops.

Sir John Norris, an able general, was sent over to Ireland by Elizabeth with 3,000 men. He marched to relieve Monaghan, which O'Neill was again blockading. O'Neill faced him at *Clontibret*, five miles from Monaghan. A river lay between the two armies. Norris charged across the stream and was driven back, receiving a wound himself, and his brother, Sir Thomas, the same. Under an Anglo-Irish officer from Meath, named Seagrave, a giant in size and strength, the English heavily mailed cavalry next attempted the passage of the stream. They got across and Seagrave, singling out O'Neill, charged him at full speed.

The great Hugh, though only of ordinary stature, did not shirk the encounter, but "met him in full career, and the lances of each were shivered to pieces on the

other's corselet." Grappling now hand to hand, they fell from their saddles and continued the deadly struggle on the ground, O'Neill being undermost. Drawing his dagger, however, he managed to thrust it between the plates of Seagrave's armour and slew the giant.

As the victor reeled to his feet, the air was rent with thunderous cries of *Lamh dearg aboo!* (The Red Hand to Victory), and rushing with renewed enthusiasm on the reeling English cavalry, the clansmen swept these back across the stream into the ranks of their own infantry, and the whole English army fled south, leaving their standard, the Red Cross of St. George, and many dead, behind. As a result of this victory Monaghan surrendered.

Success after success now attended the arms of the Confederate Chiefs. O'Neill was the brain of that confederacy and the dashing Red Hugh its sword. All North Connaught was swept clear of English by the latter, but the brave old Fiach MacHugh O'Byrne was surprised by the Lord Deputy in his stronghold of Glenmalure and slain.

In the following year, 1596, three ships arrived from Spain with arms and ammunition for O'Donnell and O'Neill, and the English now decided to invade Ulster by three different routes. Captain Richard Tyrrell, one of O'Neill's officers, ambushed one of these three armies near Mullingar, at a place ever since called "Tyrrell's Pass." The same tactics were pursued as by the O'Byrnes against Lord Grey de Wilton at Glenmalure. The troops were suddenly fired on from both sides of the wooded pass, and a slaughter rather than a battle ensued. Only two English

soldiers escaped alive, one who was sent by Tyrrell back with the news to Mullingar, and the English commander himself, Barnwell, son of Lord Trimleston, who was taken prisoner and sent as such before O'Neill.

At Drumfluich, O'Neill himself attacked the Lord Deputy's army and defeated it with heavy loss, the Deputy, Lord Borough, being mortally wounded. The third army, under Sir Conyers Clifford, was forced to retire in its turn by gallant Red Hugh.

Portmore was now besieged by O'Neill, and in the summer of 1598, his old enemy and brother-in-law, Bagnal, marched to relieve the place with 5,000 men. O'Neill, Red Hugh, Maguire, MacWilliam, and the MacDonnells of Antrim disputed his advance with an almost equal number of men. Again was a ford the scene of the conflict, O'Neill taking up a strong position at a spot called BEAL-AN-ATHA-BUIDHE (The Mouth of the YELLOW FORD), about two miles from Armagh.

There on August 14th, O'Neill gained a complete victory. As the English advanced to the attack they were annoyed by sharpshooters hid among the trees and thickets. Bagnal ordered a charge of his heavy mailed horse with lances "six cubits in length." O'Neill had had some pits dug and covered over with wattles and grass, after the manner of the Scots under Robert Bruce at Bannockburn. The English cavalry, charging impetuously forward, tumbled into these pits, and, promptly assailed by O'Neill's light-armed horse, were thrown into utter confusion and routed. The English marshal pushed forward his cannon and battered the Irish front, driving it back somewhat. O'Neill, there-

upon hurled all his men, horse and foot, upon the advancing foe, and in the terrific hand-to-hand fight that ensued, the English could not stand before the clansmen of O'Neill and O'Donnell.

Back they were being flung helplessly when a quantity of gunpowder exploded in their ranks, "through the rashness and unskilfulness of a gunner," and this increased the panic setting in. Bagnal, a brave man if a gloomy one, strove his utmost to rally his reeling troops, and, the better to do so, raised the beaver or visor of his helmet. An Irish musket-ball flew true to its mark, and, shot through the brain, the Lord Marshal of England tumbled dead from his horse. It wanted but that to decide the fortunes of the day. The division he led gave way, fled, and the other two divisions were also presently flying in utter rout, pursued by the hurraing clansmen.

With Bagnal, 2,500 English rank and file lay dead upon the field, 23 superior officers, and a number of lieutenants, ensigns and sergeants. The Irish captured 34 banners, 12,000 gold pieces, and all the artillery, provisions and musical instruments of the vanquished, while they themselves only lost 200 killed and some 600 wounded.

This great victory of the Yellow Ford is one of the most notable of all the battles fought on Irish soil. It "was the greatest overthrow that the English ever suffered since they set foot in Ireland, and O'Neill was by the Irish celebrated as the deliverer of his country from thralldom."

Portmore and Armagh immediately submitted to O'Neill, and Freedom now lit her torch from end to end



of the island. The Munster Chiefs, Irish and Anglo-Irish, joined hands, and, driving the English settlers and "Undertakers" from their lands, came into the confederacy, to O'Neill and O'Donnell's great joy.

It was O'Donnell's dashing attack on the rear of Bagnal's army that had completed its overthrow, while O'Neill in person had charged its front with his horse.

The Queen, thoroughly alarmed now, sent over her favourite, the Earl of Essex, with an army of 20,000 men and 2,000 horse to crush the Confederate Chiefs. Essex, instead of assailing O'Neill, marched into Munster. It is quite possible that, aware of his own shortcomings as a military commander, he feared to meet the redoubtable Tyrone even with so overwhelmingly superior an army, and thought to swell it by reinforcements from Ormond and the other factionist lords.

In a narrow defile at Ballybrittas, near Maryborough, the brave O'Moores dared to waylay him and slew 500 of his men. The battle-ground was afterwards found so littered with the plumes of the killed and wounded English knights that the fight is known as the "Pass of the Plumes."

Red Hugh O'Donnell defeated and slew the brave Sir Conyers Clifford, the Governor of Connaught, on the 15th of August, 1599, intercepting him in the Curlew Mountains. The English lost 1,400 men.

Reinforced by 2,000 men, Essex was now induced by an upbraiding letter from the Queen to march against O'Neill.

That wily commander proposed a conference, to which Essex readily agreed, and the two leaders met near

Anaghclart Bridge across the River Lagan. The result of their meeting was a truce, and Essex returned to London to lay the matter before the Queen. She, incensed at his not having crushed O'Neill, sent him to the Tower. O'Neill made a royal progress through Ireland, marching by way of Westmeath and Tipperary to Cork, where, at Inniscara, he met the Munster Chieftains and remained some three weeks. It was a great triumph! Ireland was temporarily a free nation again, practically.

Elizabeth now sent over a very different type of man to all her former generals to fight O'Neill. This was Charles Blount, Lord Mountjoy, who found a worthy assistant in Sir George Carew, the Governor or President of Munster. Instead of meeting O'Neill in the field, these two servants of the Queen despatched forged letters to the lesser Irish chiefs, asserting that as friends they wished to warn them that others were betraying them. The forgeries were supposed to be from the alleged traitors. In this way they set chief against chief, sowed distrust of one another among the Confederates, so that none knew but that his neighbour was selling him.

Nial Garve O'Donnell, a relation of Red Hugh's, was won over to the Queen's service either by this means or by tempting offers of emoluments and rewards, and so was Art O'Neill. Dermot O'Connor was induced to betray his kinsman, the Earl of Desmond, into Carew's hands. This Desmond was known as the "Sugane Earl." The Waterford Geraldines, the Burkes, and the White Knight, as the Chieftain of Mitchelstown was called, also turned traitors to the cause. Desmond was

called the Sugane, or "Straw-rope," Earl in derision by the factionist Irish and the English, as he had been given the title of Earl by O'Neill and not the Queen.

In the north there were other traitors beside Nial Garve O'Donnell and Art O'Neill. Sir Cahir O'Doherty went over to the English with the MacDevitts, and O'Connor Sligo turned his coat a second time. Red Hugh O'Donnell had overlooked his former treachery, but now, learning of his fresh perfidy, made a rapid march, seized him and threw him into prison at Lough Esk.

An English officer named Sir Henry Dowcra landed in Derry, and from there sallied forth, destroying the crops. Carew likewise destroyed the people's food in Munster. But, deserted and betrayed on all sides, the two Hughs set themselves back to back and still dealt telling blows against English power. In this stress, the two chiefs were cheered to learn that 3,000 Spaniards had landed at Kinsale and possessed themselves of the town and two adjacent castles. It was September, 1601

## CHAPTER XIV.

## KINSALE.—THE DEFENCE OF DUNBOY.—O'SULLIVAN'S FAMOUS RETREAT.

With 17,000 men, Mountjoy and Carew besieged the Spaniards, and Red Hugh and O'Neill made all haste to relieve their foreign allies. Carew was detached to intercept Red Hugh with a force double that young chieftain's, but the gallant O'Donnell, taking advantage of a severe frost which froze all the bogs and streams, evaded him and made a forced march that Carew himself called "the greatest march that hath been heard of." Within twenty-four hours Red Hugh covered a distance of forty English miles, with carriages and horses, crossing mountains and morasses that would have been impassable but for the frost.

The dashing young chieftain reached Kinsale, and forthwith started besieging the besiegers, and with considerable success. Within a month the slower-moving, but abler O'Neill was with him; and the English were in an ugly corner, hemmed in by foes. A plan was formed by Red Hugh to surprise the English camp by night, and it was expected that Don Juan d'Aquila, the commander of the Spaniards in the town, would sally forth on hearing the sounds of conflict and aid in the overthrow of the foe.



O'Neill was against any such attack and counselled patience ; but Red Hugh's enthusiasm and impetuosity carried the day at the council-board. Then did an execrable wretch named Brian MacMahon send secret intelligence of the projected night attack to Carew, in exchange for a bottle of whisky !

At a much later period, viz., in the rebellion of 1798, Irishmen had also good cause to curse drink and the drunkard.

It was a wild and dark night the one chosen, and the Irish army lost its way, and, instead of surprising the English, were themselves suddenly set upon and surprised by them. The heroic, if headstrong, Red Hugh held his own for a time, calling on his brother chiefs to make a stand until O'Neill with the main body could come up. Instead, the cravens to a man fled and left him. O'Neill came up, but could not co-operate on account of the intervening morasses, and he was now attacked at disadvantage by overwhelming numbers and forced to give ground.

The Irish of both divisions retreated in fairly good order, but Mountjoy, seeing his opportunity in the fact that the ground beyond was an open plain, admirable for cavalry to operate on, vigorously followed up the retreat, hurling his squadrons fiercely forward. The retreat became a rout, and for two miles a fierce pursuit was maintained. Over 1,000 of the Irish were slain, some authorities say 2,000, a number equivalent to all that Red Hugh had been able to bring south with him and not leave his own country open to his dastard cousin, Nial Garve.

At Innishannon, where the Irish were rallied by

O'Neill, it was decided that Red Hugh should proceed to Spain for further aid ; and as Don Juan D'Aquila had tamely surrendered, O'Neill and the other northern chiefs struck camp and retreated towards Ulster. The noble Red Hugh sailed for Spain and was received with the highest honour by the Spanish King, who promised him reinforcements. He was staying at the Castle of Simancas, when he was poisoned by one James Blake, an emissary of the worse miscreant Carew, in some way that has never transpired.

The gallant young Prince of Tyrconnell was only 29 when thus cut off by a murderer's hand. His body was interred with royal honours by the noble-hearted Spanish King in the Cathedral of Valladolid. Peace to his ashes, the gallant and true !

O'Sullivan Beare continued the now hopeless struggle in the south by retaking his castle of Dunboy and holding it in hopes of O'Donnell's return. Its garrison consisted of only 143 men under his steward or seneschal, Richard MacGeoghegan. Carew laid siege to it with 4,000 men. The defenders held out for eleven days until the place was almost battered to pieces about their ears with the powerful ordnance Carew had. MacGeoghegan then proposed terms. These were rejected, and the heroes determined to defend the place to the last. Contesting every foot of ground, they retreated to the cellar and barricaded themselves there so effectively that the English had to bring up a cannon to blow an entrance.

As the cannon exploded and the stormers burst in, the wounded hero MacGeoghegan attempted to cast a blazing torch into a barrel of gunpowder and blow himself with his comrades, foes and all, sky-high. Weak

and ill, his aim fell short, and he was immediately hewn to pieces and the torch trampled out.

O'Sullivan himself was not in the stronghold. He now, with the remnant of his tribe, 600 women, children and old people, and 400 warriors, made one of the most splendid retreats ever recorded, suffering all manner of perils and hardships *en route*, fighting nearly every step of the way, to the friendly O'Rourke country of Breffny, or Leitrim, adjoining Tyrone.

"Alone and unaided, O'Sullivan knew he could not maintain himself in Munster; and he formed the desperate resolution of fighting his way to Ulster." With 400 soldiers and 600 women and children, as we have said, he set out. "His march northward was a continual battle." The MacCarthys attacked him in Muskerry. He beat them off, as he also did a brother of Lord Barry at Liscarroll. It was January, 1603—the depth of winter. He marched through Limerick into Tipperary, where the sheriff attacked him and was repulsed with heavy loss.

"A vanguard of 40 men always went in front; next came the sick and wounded, the women and children, next the baggage and the ammunition, and last of all, protecting the rear, Donal (O'Sullivan) himself with the bulk of his little force."

They reached the Shannon near Portumna, and not having boats with which to cross, they killed eleven of their horses and stretched the animals' skins upon boat-frames they constructed "in the wood close by," eating the flesh, for they were short of food. Pushing on to Aughrim, they were there attacked by a superior army under Sir Thomas Burke and Colonel Henry

Malby. O'Sullivan and his little band, of only 300 now, fell on and routed their foes, killing Malby.

Through Roscommon, by Ballinlough, they continued their march, with the snow falling heavily and the wind blowing "a bitter blast." At Knock Vicar the peasantry assisted them, but "of the thousand who left Glengariffe but a fortnight before, only 35—18 armed men, 16 servants and one woman—entered O'Rourke's castle at Leitrim." (D'Alton.) About 50 more came in next day, and others were found by the search parties sent out by O'Rourke, while yet some were sheltered by the peasantry here and there—chiefly the women and children.

This retreat was "the most romantic and gallant achievement of the age," said Thomas Davis. Haverty calls it "one of the most extraordinary retreats recorded in history," and McGee, "a retreat almost unparalleled." Donal O'Sullivan sailed for Spain in 1604, and was made Earl of Berehaven by King Philip who received him with every honour and assigned him "300 pieces of gold monthly."

We will hasten to close the chapter of defeat and disaster. The great Hugh O'Neill held out undauntedly to the end, and at length wrung a full pardon from Mountjoy at Mellifont Abbey on the 30th March, 1603—a full pardon for himself and all still in rebellion, the free exercise of their religion, proscribed though it was, and undisturbed possession of their lands. Elizabeth died without hearing of the treaty, and the son of Mary Queen of Scots ascended the English throne as James I. of England. He had been brought up a Protestant and decided to "plant" Ulster with English and Scotch



settlers. A sham plot was arranged to ruin Hugh O'Neill and Red Hugh's brother, Rory O'Donnell. They were induced to attend a meeting at Maynooth Castle. It was construed into a fresh conspiracy against the Crown, and they were charged with high treason and cited to appear in London for trial.

Realising that their lives or liberties were in danger, the two Earls, for Rory O'Donnell had been created an earl also—Earl of Tyrconnell—with their families and friends, decided to leave the country. On September 14th, 1607, they set sail from Rathmullen on Lough Swilly for France, bidding farewell for ever to their native land, that land for which they had fought so bravely and well.

This sad event in Irish history is known as "The Flight of the Earls." With them sailed Maguire, the faithful and staunch, who, as a matter of fact, had returned to Ireland, risking capture in a French ship, to bring the two earls away. The great Hugh O'Neill survived all his fellow-exiles, and passed away on the 20th July, 1616, nine years after his flight. He died at Rome and the Sovereign Pontiff celebrated his obsequies "on a scale of grandeur such as is only accorded to royal princes and kings."

In his History of Ireland, the Rev. Dr. D'Alton writes: "In him the Irish lost their greatest leader, the greatest that had ever led them into battle or presided over their councils. Both Red Hugh and Art MacMurrough were daring chiefs, but the former wanted steadiness and patience, while the latter confined his efforts to Leinster alone. Unlike O'Donnell, O'Neill was cautious and foreseeing, laying his plans with care and refusing to be

led by impulse or passion. . . Had he been born a century earlier, he would probably have driven the English from Ireland. . . In his own day, against the whole forces of England, he all but succeeded and failed only because of the universal treachery which surrounded him."

Henry IV. of France, the famous "Navarre," publicly called Hugh O'Neill "the third soldier of the age."

Peace, too, to his ashes, lying guarded within the Imperial City until the last trumpet! Peace to him, true brother, true husband, true friend, true foe, "true to home and faith and freedom to the last!"

The vile Nial Garve O'Donnell, O'Cahan, and other traitors received the reward they deserved for their treachery. Suspected by their English friends they were thrown into gaol, where they languished till their deaths—Nial Garve for twenty years.

Who will say after that that there is no such thing as poetic justice on this earth?



## PART V.

### THE CONFEDERATE WAR.

A nation's right, a nation's right—  
God gave it, and gave, too,  
A nation's sword, a nation's might,  
Danger to guard it through.  
'Tis freedom from a foreign yoke,  
'Tis just and equal laws,  
Which deal unto the humblest folk,  
As in a noble cause.  
On nations fixed in right and truth,  
God will bestow eternal youth.

“Nationality,” by THOMAS DAVIS.





## CHAPTER XV.

HOW OWEN ROE O'NEILL GAVE HIS SWORD TO HIS  
SIRELAND ; AND HIS GREAT VICTORY AT BENBURB.

The great French historian, Thierry, in his work on the Norman Conquest of England and Ireland, launches out into glowing eulogies of the long-enduring struggle of the Irish people to retain its freedom as compared with the exceedingly slight one of the Anglo-Saxon race.

And yet perseverance under difficulties and constant reverses is supposed to be the great trait of the English character, bull-dog resistance that never knows defeat, whereas it is often asserted, as if it were a truism there was no denying, that the Irish race are not persevering enough. England was practically conquered by the Normans in as many years as it took them centuries to conquer the smaller sister isle.

Thierry compares the heroic struggle of our race for independence against the Norman invader with the nine hundred years' struggle of the Spaniards against the Moors. He "calls the fidelity of Irishmen to a cause ever lost, . . . the unconquerable tenacity of the Irish, this immortal clinging to the hopes of one day winning their independence, one of the noblest and most touching things in all history."

Yet there are mean, paltry natures that can see no glory in a defeated cause, that can see nothing to admire in fighting unto death rather than surrendering ; whose only idea of glory and triumph is to shout with the largest number, the conqueror, to trample on the weak, to exult over the downfall of the brave and good and true.

Yet the truth remains that in some causes, and that of freedom is one of them, it is as glorious to fail as to succeed. Success is not necessarily the measure of the virtue of a cause.

“ Freedom’s battle, once begun, bequeathed from bleeding sire  
to son,  
Though baffled oft, is ever won.”

After “ the Flight of the Earls,” the entire six counties of Ulster were declared forfeited to the English Crown, and the new Scottish King of England, the false-hearted James Stuart, false alike to the memory of his mother as everything else, determined, as we have said, to “ plant ” the North of Ireland with Scotch and English settlers, all well affected in religion, and extirpate the old Irish race.

Every inducement was held out to likely colonists Rich broad acres of the fertile land were conferred as a gift upon various Protestant bishops, guilds of London tradesmen, and even on Trinity College. It was London tradesmen who were given the City of Derry, of which they therefore changed the name to Londonderry. Many privileges were also held out as a further lure, as if any further lure were needed, to obtain colonists. All that the planters were expected to do in

return for these benefits was to rob and murder their Irish neighbours, "to hunt down the native population as they would any other wild game," to show them and their religion no consideration or mercy or tolerance whatsoever.

Of course, Court favourites and "undertakers" were found in thousands to take on so soft a job, and so was effected what was called "The Plantation of Ulster." By the Scotch and English settlers the Irishman was robbed of everything worth possessing, and was driven into the bogs and mountains, and then called a robber or a wild "rapparee," because he dared to object to such treatment and commit the awful crime of trying to recover his own home and property. The Rapparees were desperate men, heroic patriots all, fighting to the bitter end against a tyranny that was simply diabolical in its perfection.

With the succession of Charles I., the down-trodden and persecuted Irish hoped for a mitigation of the civil and religious intolerance under which they lived. The new monarch was a kindly man, unlike his father, who was empty-headed, cowardly, and cruel. Moreover, Charles had married a Catholic princess, Henrietta of France. But the wily Viceroy, Strafford, neutralised all the efforts of the Irish people to obtain the redress the King promised them. For his services to the English people in this respect, he was attainted and executed by a decree of their Parliament in 1641, and there could not have been many tears shed for him in Ireland.

Sick of it all, the Irish people in this same year determined to make another bold bid for independence.



Roger or Rory O'Moore, a descendant of the despoiled chiefs of Leix, entered into a conspiracy with Sir Phelim O'Neill, chief of a lesser branch of his clan, Lord Maguire of Enniskillen, Sir Con MacGennis, Colonel MacMahon, and others, to revolt simultaneously, seize Dublin Castle, where there were stored 12,000 stand of arms, and other strong places, make prisoners of all the gentry who were opposed to them, and expel the English planters. The Scotch, as a kindred race, were not to be molested. No blood was to be shed unless they were met with armed resistance.

To any common-sense man, this seems a very reasonable and just rising.

Everything might have gone well with the Patriots, for there were only some 2,000 troops in the country, and these quite unprepared ; but Colonel MacMahon confided the plot to one Owen O'Connelly, who promptly carried information of it to the Lords Justices Parsons and Borlase. Maguire and MacMahon were arrested, O'Moore and others managed to escape ; and the rising took place on the appointed day, the 22nd of October, 1641. Sir Phelim O'Neill captured Dungannon and Charlemont Castle ; the MacMahons captured Monaghan ; the O'Farrells, Longford, or ancient Annaly ; the Maguires, Fermanagh. All Ulster, with the exception of a few towns, within two days was in the hands of the insurgents, Sir Con MacGennis taking Newry with certain stores of arms and munitions of war.

The English planters fled in terror from their ill-gotten homes and lands, and spread lying tales of dreadful massacre and pillage and robbery by the unlawful, but certainly rightful, new owners of the soil.

Sir Phelim O'Neill was now elected as head of the Patriot army, and the Catholic Bishops met at Kilkenny on May 10th, 1642, and bound all taking part in the struggle to bear "true faith and allegiance to King Charles and his successors," thus raising the "rising" from a mere rebellion to a war in support of the English monarch, at that time waging a fierce struggle for his crown and head with his own rebellious Parliament. All on the Patriot or Royalist side were called "The Confederate Catholics of Ireland."

Meanwhile, as was evident from the Synod being held at Kilkenny, all Leinster and Munster were now in arms also, and the war was being prosecuted fiercely on all sides. But the early successes of the Confederates had not been followed up with energy, and the English and Scotch were enabled to recover from the first blow, and by weight of better sinews of war—more money, better arms, better generals, etc.—were beginning to triumph again. Sir Phelim O'Neill, with the best intentions, was incompetent as a leader and wasted three months besieging Drogheda, while the foe were sweeping the country everywhere, winning back the strongholds that had been captured at the outset.

The Anglo-Irish, bound by the ties of religion if not of blood, had thrown in their lot with the old Irish, but Lords Mountgarret, Muskerry, and Gormanstown, Barry, and the other leaders were all anything but capable commanders. As usual, the great Earl of Ormond was on the English side and had 3,000 foot and 500 horse at his back; and he had a worthy lieutenant in the savage Inchiquin, an Irishman brought up to hate his own countrymen and those allied to him by

blood. Of all the infamous characters of Irish history commend us to this Lord Inchiquin, an O'Brien—"Murrough of the Burnings" as he was nicknamed on account of his savage cruelty to men, women and children.

Clanricarde, too, in Connaught fought on the side of the enemies of his country; but Lord Mayo allied himself with the popular cause.

At this time there were a great many gallant Irishmen, as at a later period, exiles on the Continent, in consequence of the tyrannies of the previous reigns that had driven them out of the country, fighting in foreign armies. Father Luke Wadding, a patriotic Catholic priest, took it upon himself to go abroad and endeavour to enlist all this splendid military material, these Irish officers in foreign services, in the cause of their struggling country, as also to collect money for the carrying on of the war.

The most famous of all these foreign Irish veterans was the renowned Owen Roe MacArt O'Neill, a nephew of the great Hugh O'Neill, the victor of Clontibret and *Beal-an-atha-Buidhe*. He had left Ireland at an early age and was at this time a colonel in the army of the King of Spain, having seen considerable service in Flanders and achieved world-wide fame by the brilliant defence of Arras, in 1640, against three French armies. He corresponded with Rory O'Moore, the organiser of the "Rising," and determined to take a part in the struggle of his native land.

Gathering together what men he could, including two hundred trained officers, he set sail with three ships from Dunkirk. He took with him also a good supply

of arms and ammunition. On the voyage to Ireland he captured two small English vessels. He landed at Doe Castle in Donegal, July 6th, 1642, and was received with open arms by his kinsman, Sir Phelim O'Neill, who now readily and voluntarily relinquished to his superior talents the rank of commander-in-chief of the Confederate Army. Shortly after, other exiles under Colonel Preston, brother of Lord Gormanstown, landed in Wexford, and at last things looked hopeful for the Patriot cause. But Ireland would have done better without Preston !

Owen Roe at once set about training, equipping and increasing the force put at his command, which numbered only 1,500 men, so great had been the defections through repeated failure and disaster. The Scotch General, Leslie, Earl of Leven, with 20,000 men, all disciplined soldiers, feared to come to blows with him. But levies were fast coming in to swell Owen Roe's meagre little force. On October 24th the famous "Confederation of Kilkenny" met, and it elected a Supreme Council of six persons from each province, of which Lord Mountgarret was made president. Owen Roe was constituted general of the Ulster army and Preston of that of Leinster, thus planting in the breast of the last-mentioned jealousy of his brother-commander. A "General Assembly" of the lords and bishops and gentry was also convened, and passed resolutions ordering 30,000 men to be raised, with a sum of £30,000.

Owen Roe soon gave tangible evidence of his military ability. He met a superior force of English under General Monk and Lord Moore at Portlester, five miles



from Trim, in Meath, and routed it, Lord Moore being killed, with a great many of his troops, and Monk and the rest made fly for their lives back to Dublin. The Irish triumphed elsewhere, at Fermoy, where the English general, Sir Charles Vavasor, was captured and several hundreds of his men left dead on the field.

Disputes now arose, however, between the Irish and Anglo-Irish. The latter were all for peace and trusting that the King, who had no power in his own country and was at war there with his rebellious Parliament, would grant their demands if they laid down their arms. They were deluded in this by specious promises held out to them by Ormond and the Protestant Royalists. A "cessation" was eventually agreed to, the Confederates promising the King £30,000 and help in Scotland. The help was sent under Sir Alexander MacDonnell, surnamed "Colkitto," who joined the brave Montrose and went through his campaign.

In the following month, October 1645, John Baptist Rinuccini, the Archbishop of Fermo, arrived in Ireland, sent as Nuncio by the Pope. He brought arms and ammunition and money for the Confederate cause, and was received with the utmost enthusiasm. The munitions of war that he brought included 2,000 muskets, 4,000 swords, 4,000 pistols, 2,000 pikeheads and 20,000 lbs. of powder, and were quite a Godsend to the Patriots.

Inspired by this valuable aid, Owen Roe O'Neill now took the field properly, threw aside the fetters of ignoble truces and other hindrances that had hitherto hampered his every attempt at decisive action, and

marched against the Scottish Parliamentary general Munroe, who was wasting Ulster.

The two armies encountered one another at BENBURB, on the banks of the Blackwater, some miles north of Armagh, on the 5th of June, 1646. Munroe had with him 6,000 foot and 800 horse; Owen Roe's army consisted of only 5,000 foot and 400 horse. Munroe's brother, George, commanded another force at Coleraine and was marching to his reinforcement.

Owen Roe detached the two regiments of MacMahon and MacNinney to intercept George Munroe, which they did, surprising him and cutting his force to pieces. They then rejoined the main body in time to encourage it with their success and take part in the still more glorious victory of Benburb. Along the Blackwater O'Neill had disposed his army between two hills, with the rear protected by a wood. The Scotch came on in full force and were first faced by Colonel Richard O'Farrell, one of Owen Roe's most distinguished officers. O'Farrell held a narrow defile through which the Scotch had to force their way. He disputed its passage until their artillery forced him to fall back.

The Scotch horse now charged but were checked by the steady fire of O'Neill's infantry, and so excellently had Owen Roe posted these that only one man was struck by the foe's artillery. For four hours O'Neill kept the enemy in play, wearing out his horse by ineffectual charges, and gradually forcing him into a narrow angle between the Blackwater and one of its tributaries. The return of the Irish horse from the wiping out of George Munroe's force increased the confusion in the English and Scotch ranks.

O'Neill now ordered a charge along the whole line, and "like an avalanche let loose, the Irish crashed upon their foe." The Scottish horse attempted to break the advancing line, but were charged in turn by the Irish horse, who threw them back in disorder upon their first line. Wofully shattered, this was hurled back in succession upon the second line, and, sweeping all before them, the Irish captured the foemen's guns, when all became an utter rout.

"The Irish infantry charged up hill without firing a shot," says Grant, "and closed in with sabre and pike.

. . . In vain did Munroe's cavalry charge this determined infantry; it threw back from its face squadron after squadron, and kept constantly, rapidly and evenly advancing. . . . though exposed to the play of Munroe's guns and musketry." And again, O'Neill's "foot moved on in steady columns, and his horse in the spaces between the first and second charges of his masses."

Thus it is evident that Owen Roe's army won by no mere impetuous dash, but displayed superior tactics and a higher discipline than Munroe's veterans.

The Scotch and English left 3,248 dead on the field. Numbers more perished by drowning in trying to cross the river, or fell among the bogs, pursued by the nimble-footed Irish kernes. All their guns, tents, baggage, and arms, with 32 colours, 1,500 draught horses and provisions for two months, besides Lord Montgomery and 21 officers, 150 men and stores of ammunition were captured by the Irish, who on their side only had 70 men killed and 200 wounded !

General Munroe himself, leaving his hat, sword and

cloak behind, fled at top speed with the remnant of his late proud force to Lisburn and thence to Carrickfergus.

It was a glorious victory ; and, some days later, the 32 captured standards were borne in solemn procession by the chiefs of the Irish nobility at Limerick, followed by the Papal Nuncio, the Archbishop of Cashel and three bishops, to St. Mary's Cathedral where the *Te Deum* was chanted and a Mass of thanksgiving celebrated.

Owen Roe's countenance was exceedingly gentle and gracious in expression. He wore a thick square brown beard, and his eyes were large, bold and eloquent of feeling ; his nose was a sharp, thin compromise between the aquiline and the Roman—a nose like Julius Caesar's. The face, though, was not sufficiently stern or inflexible for a leader of those troublous days. He suffered himself, out of modesty and nobility of character, to be too much thrust aside by men of inferior military capacities but ineffably superior self-conceit and more violent temperament. The portrait of him that has come down to us shows him wearing a flat cap like a Scotch bonnet, with a jewelled clasp, and a shaggy fur cloak over a steel corselet.



## CHAPTER XVI.

## CROMWELL IN IRELAND.—HIS REPULSE AT CLONMEL.

But the pusillanimity of the Anglo-Irish, who still wanted alliance with the Ormondist party and the King, in great measure counteracted this splendid triumph of the popular cause, and Ormond, "the great" Duke or Earl as he has been called, actually surrendered Dublin to the Parliamentarians, receiving £5,000 and a pension of £2,000 per annum. After this unspeakable treachery, however, to even his King, he fled the country. Ormond sold his King rather than hand over the capital to O'Neill and Preston who were investing it.

And now Preston's jealousy of O'Neill aided in the ruin of the cause also. His military talents were by no means of a high order, yet he sought to eclipse Benburb. With 7,000 foot and 1,000 horse he encountered an inferior force of English under General Jones, the new Parliamentary Governor of Dublin, at Dungan Hill, near Trim, abandoning an excellent position to crush the latter. He was most ignominiously defeated and lost, it is said, over 5,000 men. It was a dreadful disaster; the Confederate army of Leinster was practically exterminated. Owen Roe came up with 12,000 men, and Jones retired within the walls of Dublin.

The savage Inchiquin, too, reduced Munster, though he shrank from attacking the famous Sir Alexander McDonnell, known as "Colkitto" (the Left-handed) at Clonmel. Colkitto and his brave Antrim MacDonnells had, as we have said "formed the backbone of the army which, under the gallant Montrose, did such splendid service for King Charles." The heroic Colkitto was afterwards put to the sword in cold blood by Inchiquin, with whom some of the Confederate Council actually afterwards made a truce, completely tying the hands of Owen Roe. Ormond returned to the people he had betrayed, and, joined by Preston and Inchiquin, invested Dublin. The garrison made a sortie and "the great" Earl was completely routed with a loss of nearly 7,000 men.

A new, and indeed a terrible, foe now landed in Ireland. This was the future great Lord High Protector of England, Oliver Cromwell. He landed at Ringsend, near Dublin, on August 14th, 1649, with 9,000 foot and 4,000 horse, his equally dreaded "Ironsides." With his force increased by the Dublin army to 17,000 men he attacked Drogheda, held for the Confederates by a gallant English Catholic officer, Sir Arthur Aston, and 3,000 men. Speedily breaching the wall of the town with his heavy ordnance, Cromwell flung a storming party forward. It was twice repulsed, with the loss of its colonel, but eventually forced a passage into the town and this was won. The heroic Sir Arthur Aston, however, and 250 others barricaded themselves in the Milmount, a place of some strength in the south town, and made such resistance that Cromwell offered them quarter if they surrendered. Relying on the Lord

Deputy's word, the garrison laid down its arms, and was immediately butchered to a man. The slaughter did not stop at that. For five days it went on, and non-combatants, men, women and children were massacred with the armed men. But our intention is to avoid such barbarous horrors as the merciless, iron-hearted Cromwell now inaugurated, and so we will not give further details. His purpose was to create terror and thus unnerve his foes, and his plan succeeded in a measure.

He next turned his attention to Wexford. The Wexford people would have none of Ormond's men, and would only hear of having a garrison of 1,200 reliable Ulster men under Colonel Sinnott and Sir Edmond Butler. Here Captain Stafford, the Royalist commander of the castle, secretly corresponded with Cromwell and admitted the Puritans into the castle, turning his guns then upon the betrayed and amazed town. The Irish were thus driven from the walls and the English entered, and again, as at Drogheda, put men, women and little children to the sword. In the market-place, now known as the "Bull Ring," 300 women, kneeling for protection around the great cross, were butchered by the inhuman "Ironsides" like sheep. During the carnage, a priest stood on the steps of the cross holding aloft a crucifix, calling on the women to die bravely for Christ and his saints—stood there, thus exhorting and encouraging, until he was himself struck down by an English soldier's steel.

If we execrate the traitor of Wexford, let us honour that noble priest, also a Stafford—Father Raymond Stafford.

At Ross or New Ross, General Luke Taffe wrung honourable terms from Cromwell, and General O'Farrell, with only 500 Ulster men, forced him to raise the siege of Waterford. Cromwell's army was now suffering from fever and dysentery, and had Owen Roe O'Neill been able to measure swords with him, it is not at all improbable that the future Lord High Protector would have found his match—we mean in the field of battle.

But just before Cromwell's arrival in Ireland, the gallant Irish leader had been seized with a strange malady, "attributed by some to slow poison."\* He now lay sick unto death at Cloughoughter in County Cavan, even as he was on the point of marching south against Cromwell. There he died on November 6th, 1649, the last hope of the Irish Confederates. The great Earl of Ormond promptly fled the country again, fearing to meet Cromwell.

Wintering at Cork, Cromwell continued his campaign, capturing Kilkenny and many other places. He laid siege to Clonmel, defended by Hugh O'Neill, a nephew of Owen Roe, and to whose soldierly abilities even Carlyle gives praise. The vauntedly "invincible Ironsides" of Cromwell were hurled back under his eyes with a loss of 2,500 of their number after four hours' hard and incessant fighting. Never before had they suffered such a carnal reverse; and the entire Irish garrison only numbered 1,500 men. Every man of it had practically accounted for two of the inhuman butchers of Wexford and Drogheda.

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\* The tradition, "absurdly erroneous," is that he danced in poisoned slippers.



The grand defence of Clonmel was a fight Irishmen have just cause to be proud of. Cromwell, finding the sword useless, had tried treachery and made a secret arrangement with Major Thomas Fennell, General O'Neill's second-in-command, to betray the garrison. "O'Neill suspected something; Fennell was arrested, and on promise of pardon revealed the whole plot; O'Neill strengthened the position—the Northern gate"—and allowed the 500 Puritans to be admitted as arranged. Then the gates were slammed to in the faces of the others waiting to enter, and the 500, assailed on all sides, were quickly killed.

Weakened thus in numbers, Cromwell obtained reinforcements and breached the west wall. O'Neill secretly formed a lane, 80 yards long, on the other side of the breach, during the night; when the English poured into this, thinking to carry all before them, they found themselves in this lane, or "pound," hemmed in on either hand by a bank of earth, timber and stones, six or seven feet in height, with a footbank behind for the Irish lining it to stand upon and hew and thrust and shoot over it at their trapped foes. Two heavy guns were set at the end of the lane to enfilade it, and in houses along the lane picked musketeers were posted. A deep ditch was dug in front of the guns, which were mounted behind a parapet.

When the lane was completely filled with the storming party the Irish suddenly popped up on both sides of it and fell on with pike and sword, musket and scythe, while the two guns, hitherto masked and unsuspected by the foe, swept it with chainshot, ploughing two awful tracks of dead and dying throughout its whole length.

Shut up in the narrow space and thus terribly beset, the English could do nothing. It was a veritable death-trap and they were mown down to the number of 2,000 dead.

A second attempt to storm that lane of death was no more successful ; and, declaring the Irish invincible, Cromwell turned the siege into a blockade, whereupon O'Neill made a sortie upon an unsuspecting post of the Puritans and cut it off to a man.

But the heroic defenders' provisions and ammunition were exhausted. Secretly in the night General O'Neill drew all his men out of the town and retired to Waterford, what time, acting on his instructions, the Mayor went to Cromwell with an offer to surrender the place on condition the lives, liberties and estates of all were secured. Cromwell was willing to get the place on any terms and agreed to those proposed. He was exceedingly wroth when he found how he had been tricked, but he abided by the conditions, well content to take the town where he had encountered " the stoutest enemy his army had ever met with in Ireland." In that death-trap lane within the breach, he lost one of his colonels, Cullin, who was shot dead, and another, Langley, had his left hand lopped off with a scythe.

Cromwell's campaign in Ireland was not therefore, as is too often supposed, one of uninterrupted success. The " Defence of Clonmel " was undoubtedly its most glorious episode, and far more worthy of note than the massacres of Wexford and Drogheda.

Cromwell now turned over the command to his son-in-law, Ireton, and quitted Ireland, returning to England on May 29th. It is just possible that he was afraid his

prestige would suffer if he remained much longer in the country.

Heber MacMahon, Bishop of Clogher, had taken command of the Ulster army after Owen Roe's death. He was defeated by Coote and Venables, taken prisoner and hanged. General Preston, at Waterford, surrendered to Ireton, and this Puritan general now laid siege to Limerick.

The heroic General Hugh O'Neill, the defender of Clonmel, was military governor of Limerick, but he had with him the same officer who had betrayed him before, Major Fennell, now a Colonel. This man was a born traitor. He betrayed the pass of the Shannon to Ireton—the ford at Killaloe,—and it is probable that he went to Limerick for the express purpose of betrayal.

The town held out in spite of the heavy guns and mortar-pieces that the English, closely investing the place, played upon its walls, replying by a counter-cannonade and sorties that did considerable execution. Every attempt to carry the city by storm was beaten back. Ireton offered honourable terms and the townspeople heroically rejected them, though O'Neill, seeing the hopelessness of the struggle, was for accepting them. For four more months the siege dragged on, the Irish hurling back the stormers from the walls every time these advanced.

But a worse foe than the English arms entered the city—the plague—and reduced its fighting strength to 2,500 men. Faction, too, set in, to further sap its resources; and now was the traitor Fennell's opportunity. He, with some other traitors and factionists,

seized St. John's Gate, threw it open, and, admitting 200 English troops, threatened to turn the guns of the gate on the city if terms were not made.

Two days later the town surrendered, and, by the Articles of Agreement or Treaty, all were allowed life and property except 24 persons—General Hugh O'Neill, General Purcell, the Bishops of Limerick and Emly, and others. All these were put to death, except Bishop O'Dwyer of Limerick, who escaped disguised as a soldier, and General O'Neill, "who was spared because of the odium his execution would cause in foreign countries." It is said that Bishop O'Brien of Emly, when sentenced to death, turned to Ireton and predicted that he would follow him beyond the grave within a fortnight. Ireton died of the plague in the city he had captured within the time named.

He had lost 8,000 men in reducing heroic Limerick. The traitor Fennell received a just reward. He was hanged by the English for two murders he was proved to have committed. The heroic Hugh O'Neill, on the other hand, the betrayed, was sent to the Tower of London, "but the Spanish ambassador interfered on his behalf, and he was allowed to go to Spain." There "he was received with the honour due to a brave soldier and patriot." He assumed the title of Earl of Tyrone, and in 1660 petitioned Charles II. for restoration of the honours and estates of his ancestors. But Charles turned a deaf ear presumably.

Athlone, Galway, and the remaining strongholds of the Confederates now surrendered one by one, and once more Ireland was prostrate under the iron heel of England. Of what followed, of the "Cromwellian



Settlement of Ireland," it is not our province to say much, as we have no desire to harrow our readers' minds. Suffice it to say that the native population were treated most cruelly. "To Hell or Connaught" was the cry, and any Irish people found east of the Shannon after May 1st, 1654, were to be put to death. But many refused to be thus driven into the barren wilds of the West and carried on a fierce guerilla warfare under the name of "Rapparees" or "Tories," as before. No less than 4,000 Irish soldiers quitted the country of their birth and took service in the armies of France, Spain and Poland. Religious persecution now reached an unparalleled degree in Ireland, priests being hunted down mercilessly for £10 per head.

## PART VI.

### FOR JAMES OR WILLIAM

Do you remember long ago,  
Kathaleen,  
When your lover whispered low  
" Shall I stay or shall I go,  
Kathaleen ? "  
And you answered proudly, " Go,  
Join King James and strike a blow  
For the Green."

" After Aughrim," by ARTHUR GERALD GEORGHEGAN.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE DEFENCE OF DERRY.

The reign of the Commonwealth or Puritan Government in England was short-lived and practically collapsed with the death of the dictator, Oliver Cromwell. With their usual inconsistency, the English people at once swung round to the other extreme, and, throwing all the restraints and democratic notions of Puritanism to the winds, welcomed back the son of the King they had executed—welcomed back Charles II. with such obsequious expressions of loyalty as to make that satirical monarch dryly remark that “if he had only known how much the people loved him he would have come before.”

With the Restoration of royalty in England, the Irish people hoped for better treatment, but the “great earl” of Ormond, who had done so little good for the cause of King Charles I., had the ear of the new King, and took care to deceive him, and obtain a dukedom for himself. Charles II., too, with all the goodwill in the world, was afraid to show too much leniency to the Irish and offend his new subjects, whose fickleness or changeableness he fully appreciated.

His brother, who was a Catholic, succeeded him on the English throne, and was called James II. This



monarch soon ran counter to the will of his people by attempting to introduce toleration and religious equality. He was a convert to the Catholic religion, and his eldest daughter, Mary, was a Protestant, and had married William of Nassau, Prince of Orange and Stadtholder of Holland, who was not only the King's son-in-law therefore, but also his nephew. The English people invited Prince William to come and dispossess James of the throne, and, needless to say, the Dutch prince came quickly.

He landed at Torbay in the south of England on November 5th, 1688, with 15,000 men, and James II., deserted by his army and fleet and all his Court favourites, had to fly to France, whereby he was declared to have abdicated. William entered London in triumph.

James II. had appointed Richard Talbot, created Earl of Tyrconnell, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Tyrconnell was a Catholic, and now he proceeded to disband and disarm the Protestant militia and raise a Catholic army. The Ulster Protestants naturally resented this and took alarm, seizing on several of the principal places, such as Derry, Enniskillen, Sligo, Coleraine, and Culmore Fort. James II.'s only hope of recovering the crown that his daughter and son-in-law had deprived him of, was by retaining Ireland and waging war from its shores. Well aided by the French King, he landed, therefore, at Kinsale in March, 1689, and was received, on account of his religion as much as the fact that they considered him the rightful king with open arms by the great mass of the Irish people. Tyrconnell met him at Cork, and an army of 30,000

men, horse and foot, was speedily raised to fight for him. But the Irish had been forbidden the use of arms since Cromwell's time, so were wholly undisciplined. The officers were for the most part country gentlemen with no military knowledge either, and the very blacksmiths did not know how to make arms. The only soldiers at all in the army worthy of the name were the Rapparees, or Tories, the hunted outlaws who had lived, like Robin Hood and "his merrie men" of English renown, in the hills and glens, waging a savage guerilla warfare upon those who had driven them from their lands and homes.

These Rapparees were so named from the half-pikes adopted by them both as weapons and distinctive tokens and called "rapparees." And these lacked the steadiness of disciplined troops, being accustomed only to guerilla or irregular warfare, that of the ambush and sudden onfall, the fierce reprisal, to only fighting at advantage and to seeking safety in flight when taken at disadvantage.

Of this raw army, Tyrconnell, a most incompetent man, was made commander, and a French general, De Rosen, was second in command. A regiment under Lord Antrim was sent by Tyrconnell to seize and garrison Derry. Lundy, the governor, was a secret partisan of James and was for surrendering the place, but while negotiations were pending a great mob of the "'Prentice Boys" rushed up and shut the gates in the face of King James's commissioners and soldiers, raising the shout of "No Surrender!"

The cry was taken up by the townspeople, who were all Protestants, and had been greatly swollen in

numbers by terrified refugees from other parts—co-religionists of course.

“No surrender! We will hold the place for King William of Orange!”

It would certainly seem that at first the Williamite garrison and volunteer combatants within the city were numerically stronger than their besiegers, and two regiments arrived from England to swell their number. Nevertheless the place was not well equipped for a siege, the fortifications were only “a simple wall overgrown with grass and weeds; there was not even a ditch before the gates.” Provisions, too, were scarce, the guns poorly mounted, and there were not many horses for cavalry.

Seeing the spirit of the townspeople, Lundy fled in the disguise of a porter, leaving the city without a head. “But there were not wanting men of energy and ability to step into his place. The Rev. George Walker, the Protestant Rector of Donaghmore, was made governor, and two officers, Major Baker and Captain Murray, assumed the military command. If they had little else in the town they had plenty of ammunition, 480 barrels of gunpowder having been smuggled into it. Stronger works, too, were now pushed forward with.

James’s troops summoned the place to surrender, but they were fired on by way of answer, and so the very much disappointed Catholic King sat down to besiege the place. In all there were 7,500 trained officers and soldiers in Derry, and the Volunteers, according to “one who was in the city and ought to know,” brought the fighting strength up to 12,000. Moreover, they had

22 guns, "two of which were placed on the tower of the cathedral."

The besieging forces did not exceed 10,000 men;\* and they had but six guns!

King James left General Maumont to prosecute the siege and departed for the more congenial atmosphere of Dublin, where he could play at being a monarch still. Maumont, on account of the poor ordnance he had, determined to first attempt an escalade or assault by storm, knowing well the dash and impetuosity of even an undisciplined Irish army. But the onslaught was as fiercely met. The 'prentice boys and other volunteers flocked to the wall to the support of the Williamite troops, who at first gave way and suffered the Jacobites to capture the entrenchments at Windmill Hill. With pike and musket, axe and adze and iron bars, the defenders battled desperately with the wild Irish stormers.

The women, the wives of the colonists, were inspired with the general enthusiasm, and, mingling with their husbands behind the wall and trenches, handed these ammunition or loaded their muskets for them. Some women even rushed to the fray, like their sisters of another faith did at Limerick later, and hurled stones and broken bottles and household utensils at the assailants. These were repulsed with a loss of 400 men killed and wounded and Captain Butler—son of Lord Mountgarret—the leader of the assault, who was captured with six other officers.

The siege now became a blockade. It was decided

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\*The Duke of Berwick said the besiegers were only 6,000, possibly to start with. The highest estimate is only 20,000.



to reduce the place by starvation; and in order to prevent supplies coming up the River Foyle into the place the besiegers built a "boom" or barricade across the stream between Culmore Fort and the town—actually between Charles Fort and Grange Fort. Several boats full of stones were first sunk at the point, then a row of stakes was driven into the bottom of the river, and great barks of timber were lashed together and fastened to either shore by cables a foot thick.

For over three months the siege dragged out, all attempts of the Irish to storm the walls being gallantly repelled and the defenders occasionally sallying forth and inflicting loss on their besiegers. But the brave garrison was reduced to the last extremities of starvation: strong men within its ranks died of hunger. Weeds and herbs were eaten, a mouse sold for sixpence, a rat for a shilling, and tallow and hides were greedily consumed, and this though there was at the mouth of the river a fleet with abundant supplies from England.

At length, on the 28th of July, three frigates, the Mountjoy, the Phoenix, and the Dartmouth, determined to try and force the boom in the river and carry provisions up to the beleaguered city. Returning the heavy fire poured upon them from the forts on either side of the river, the three vessels boldly stood up this. The first ship, the Mountjoy, charged the boom, and, recoiling, ran aground. She was refloated by her gallant crew and again put at the boom, which gave way before the shock.

Passing through the breach, the vessels continued on to the city and took the long-looked-for relief to the starving garrison. Disheartened, the Jacobite general



Bursting the boom across the Foyle





Hamilton—General Maumont had been killed earlier—raised the siege, “the most memorable and desperate recorded in the annals of the British Isles.”

But, look at it how one may, if the garrison are to be admired for their stubborn tenacity, patience and “spirit of self-sacrifice which has been rarely equalled in war” (D’Alton), must we not also admire a raw, wholly undisciplined, half-armed army of 10,000 recruits—the Duke of Berwick asserted the besiegers did not exceed 6,000—who, with only six guns, could shut up 12,000 well armed combatants, 7,500 of whom were trained veterans, equipped with 22 guns, within any place at all, and not only shut them up, but keep them there when maddened by starvation.

Due honour to both sides, let us say.

The besiegers lost fully 8,000 men, according to Grant, the besieged 3,000. Other, and perhaps more reliable, authorities place the defenders’ loss as high as 6,000.

Another reverse that the Jacobites suffered about the same time was near Enniskillen. The garrison of that town intercepted a force under Lord Mountcashel advancing to besiege them and utterly routed it at Newtownbutler, with a loss of 2,000 slain and 400 prisoners. Mountcashel himself was wounded and captured.

All Ulster had now declared for William except Carrickfergus and Charlemont, which were the only two fortified places in the hands of the Jacobites, as James’s followers were called from *Jacobus*, the Latin for James. James had summoned a Parliament and it met at Dublin on May 27th, and is known as “the



Patriot Parliament of 1689." The House of Peers consisted of 54 members, only 14 of whom were Protestants, but of these six were Protestant bishops. No Catholic bishop, strange to say, was summoned. In the Commons there were 224 members who also consisted mostly of Catholics. Sir Richard Nagle, a lawyer, who had written against the Act of Settlement, was appointed Speaker. This "Patriot Parliament" repealed all the penal laws and gave liberty of conscience to all. It also granted bounties for ship-building and for the establishment of schools of navigation, and attainted of high treason over 2,000 persons who had joined the Prince of Orange, declaring their estates forfeit, and imposed a tax of £20,000 monthly for the maintenance of the army.

King William of England struck quickly. He sent Marshal Schomberg with a powerful army over to Belfast, and Carrickfergus surrendered after a week's siege, the garrison having exhausted their ammunition. Schomberg, however, avoided a pitched battle with the Irish and went into winter quarters at Dundalk. He then blockaded Charlemont Castle, which was held for James by Teague O'Regan with only 800 men. Schomberg had as many thousands with him and a fine siege train. O'Regan was a hunchback and an elderly man; he held Charlemont for several months and was reduced by hunger to the last extremity. Even then he would only hear of surrendering on being allowed to march out with all the honours of war. Schomberg agreed, and forth O'Regan marched with arms and baggage, and colours flying, his men weak and wasted with starvation and half-healed wounds, accompanied

by "a large number of women and children, eagerly gnawing pieces of dry hides with the hair on ; a small portion of filthy meal and a few pounds of tainted beef being the only provisions remaining in the fort."

King James conferred on the gallant O'Regan the honour of knighthood and made him Governor of Sligo.

And now came William of Orange himself to fight for his newly gotten crown. On June 14th, 1690, he landed at Carrickfergus with an army of 45,000 men, most of whom were continental veterans, well armed, well drilled, well officered. He had a train of 60 guns. James at once advanced against him from Dublin with an army of, at most, 23,000 men, Irish and French, and with but 12 pieces of cannon. It was a piece of bravery not to be expected of James.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## THE BOYNE WATER.—SARSFIELD'S RIDE.—THE WOMEN OF LIMERICK.

The two armies faced each other on the banks of the Boyne, where was fought a battle the result of which could not have been in doubt for a moment. William's army far outnumbered the Jacobites, was almost two to their one, and was, moreover, better led and better equipped in every way. The Williamites were veterans to a man, while only a few thousands of James's army were well trained French troops ; the rest were the raw Irish levies, hastily drilled, and now, for the first time seeing real battle, and that pitted against the finest soldiers in the world. The odds were big, too, in the case of artillery. As we have said, William had 60 large guns, and James only 12.

Nevertheless, those raw Irish recruits fought with the usual intrepidity of their race on that fateful 1st of July, 1690.

As if to bear out the truth of the saying that " those whom the gods wish to destroy, they first make mad," James sent away six of his 12 guns to Dublin and neglected to destroy the bridge of Slane, the key to his position ! Only at the last moment, too, was the ford at Rosnaree guarded, Sir Neil O'Neill being sent just

in time, though vainly, to defend it with 800 dragoons, when he should have had cannon and means of throwing up barricades. Charles I. of England, who was executed by Cromwell and the Parliamentarians, was said "to have been his own best general." James II. may well be said to have been his own worst general, and but for the gallant Patrick Sarsfield, who was created Earl of Lucan and was descended on his mother's side from the O'Moores, Princes of Leix, James was not blessed with a brilliant throng of generals by any means.

For an entire hour, the Irish dragoons of Sir Neil O'Neill disputed the passage of the ford, exposed to the fire of a numerous artillery and charges of cavalry greatly their superiors in number. They drove the Dutch Guards and Schomberg's regiment back several times into the river until at last Sir Neil fell from his horse mortally wounded, when the Williamites forced their way across. Outflanked, Lauzun, James's French general, sent all his Frenchmen and the horse under Sarsfield, with the six guns, to drive back that wing of the foe.

The centre of the Jacobite position was now left without a gun, and with only the raw Irish recruits to hold it against the redoubtable King William himself. Marshal Schomberg led his troops into the river at the fords of Oldbridge. Bravely the Irish contested his passage, although a few of the raw levies bolted, it is said. If the whole lot had done so there would not have been much to marvel at, seeing they were being heavily cannonaded and had not a single gun to reply with; that they were all undisciplined, ill-officered troops and were confronting veterans.



And yet the Williamites were hurled back with the loss of two of their generals, Caillemote and Schomberg himself, as well as the Rev Mr. Walker, the militant parson who had defended Derry. King William himself had been wounded earlier in the fight and had to hasten to the scene to prevent disaster. His arrival put a different complexion on affairs. The Irish foot were borne back, overwhelmed by numbers, and at length gave way on all sides. But the Irish horse "continued to resist desperately." The French infantry, too, covered the retreat well. William was struck by two balls, one of which carried away his boot.

The Irish fell back on Duleek, turning at bay and making a last stand at the Naul at nine o'clock. James fled in terror from the scene taking Sarsfield, the only officer capable of redeeming the day, with him to act as his bodyguard. The tale is told that on arriving at Dublin, the cowardly monarch said to Lady Tyrconnell that the Irish troops had shamefully run away.

"But your Majesty won the race," cuttingly replied the lady.

The very next day he posted off to Kinsale, whence he sailed for France, taking thither the news of his own defeat.

At the Boyne the loss on both sides was about a thousand killed and wounded, but the Williamites lost Marshal Schomberg and Caillemote, two of their general officers, and William himself was wounded. The whole of the tent equipage, baggage, arms, etc., of the Irish were captured, however, with many standards, horses, and prisoners. Their six field-pieces do not appear to have been taken, the only artillery they

had, and the French and Swiss infantry retired in good order, covered by the Irish horse, and marched into Dublin in perfect discipline, "with their drums beating, and colours flying, their white uniforms blackened by dust and in many instances splashed with blood" (Grant). So it could not have been such a hopeless defeat, and with a commander worthy of the name might well have been retrieved.

The Irish, however, under the incompetent Tyrconnell, whose wife possibly might have made a better leader, abandoned Dublin and concentrated at Limerick. Happily now, Tyrconnell followed James to France and the command devolved on General Sarsfield. He had inherited the family estates at Lucan with an income of £2,000 a year and had married the Lady Honor, second daughter of the Earl of Clanricarde. He had held a lieutenancy in the English Guards, and had followed the deposed James II. to France and then to Ireland.

Athlone Castle was held for the Jacobites by Colonel Richard Grace, an old Confederate Catholic of 1641, "now laden with years, but as bold of heart and brave of spirit as when first he drew a sword for Ireland." King William detached General Douglas with 12,000 men and a siege train of 12 cannon and 2 mortars to reduce the place. When called on to surrender, the hero Grace fired his pistol in the air, and said that was his answer.

Grace had demolished the English suburb of the town and broken down the bridge. Douglas besieged the place, bombarding it fiercely but ineffectively for ten days; then, hearing that Sarsfield was coming with 15,000 men, he again asked Grace to surrender. Grace's

reply this time was to hang out a red flag, a sign of "war to the death." With his ammunition nearly exhausted and dreading an attack from Sarsfield, whose name was already becoming one of terror to the Williamites, Douglas withdrew, leaving old Governor Grace victorious.

Sarsfield gathered together 20,000 foot and 3,500 horse in Limerick. The French General Lauzun, when he saw the fortifications of the city, scoffingly said they could be taken with roasted apples, and carried off the whole of the French troops to Galway, to support a fatuous lunatic who believed himself to be the chosen deliverer of the Irish race, one Balderg, or "Red Mouth" O'Donnell. Chosen deliverer, indeed! The same O'Donnell did not hesitate later to betray his countrymen.

One gallant French captain, however, named De Boisseleau, to whom all honour be paid, stood by Sarsfield, and having had considerable experience in fortification work, set himself to strengthen and improve the defences of Limerick in every conceivable way. King William arrived before the gates of the city in person on August 9th, 1690, and seized on the fords north of it. On the very next day a Huguenot deserter from his army got into the city and informed Sarsfield that a convoy was on its way from Dublin with heavy siege guns, pontoons and large stores of ammunition. Sarsfield determined on a bold move.

He sought the aid and counsel of a daring and noted Rapparee chief fighting under him, the famous "Galloping O'Hogan," who knew every hole and corner in the county. O'Hogan was as ready and eager as

himself for the daring attempt suggested ; and with 500 picked horsemen, the pair slipped out of Limerick secretly under cover of the darkness on that same Sunday midnight, August 10th, by way of Thomond Bridge, crossing thus into Clare.

Led unerringly by O'Hogan, they struck rapidly north, making a detour to avoid William's outposts, and crossed the Shannon again at Killaloe. Daybreak saw the resolute little band snugly hiding in the recesses or glens of Keeper Hill. There they remained all day, Sarsfield sending out scouts to locate the convoy and discover all that they might.

Only 100 strong, the convoy encamped for the night at Ballyneety, 17 miles from Limerick, and by a very curious coincidence chose the name of its deadly foe, Sarsfield himself, as its password for the night—a fact one of Sarsfield's scouts informed him of. Stealthily, under the skilful guidance still of Galloping O'Hogan, Sarsfield stole through the inky night upon the camp. The outer sentry challenged :

“ The password ? ”

“ Sarsfield,” answered the owner of the name.

“ Right ! Pass on,” answered the sentry.

The troop passed him by without awakening suspicion.

Again came the challenge from a second sentry.

“ Sarsfield is the word, and Sarsfield is the man ! ” were the famous words the daring Irish general cried in ringing tones, and at the signal the whole 500 horsemen thundered down with flashing sabres and terrifying war-shout upon the sleeping camp.

The startled Williamites sprang up, fuddled with



their slumbers, only to be cut down or made prisoners, and in a few minutes all was over. The siege train was captured. Sarsfield ordered the pontoons, which were to be used for making bridges by which William's army might cross the river, to be smashed to atoms, what time all the guns were filled chokeful with powder, and then turned muzzle downward and half buried in the earth, the ammunition waggons being ringed close around with everything else that the Irish troopers could not conveniently carry off with them.

A train of gunpowder was then laid, and fired, as the troops drew off to a safe distance. With a flash that was seen in William's own camp and a report which shook the surrounding hills and woke a thousand deafening echoes among them, guns and waggons and pontoons were all blown up together—ceased to be.

Back Sarsfield and his gallant troop then rode as they had come, still safely piloted by the faithful O'Hogan, and they took back with them 100 saddle horses, the horses of the entire convoy, with the 400 draught horses of the train laden with what provisions and ammunition had been possible in the haste necessary.

William had, as a matter of fact, been warned by a partisan of his, who had seen Sarsfield cross the Shannon, and had sent a force to intercept him. But O'Hogan led the band across on the return at Banagher, and so it regained the city walls in safety, to the enthusiastic delight of all within these, townspeople and garrison alike.

Furious at this set-back, William sent to Waterford for another siege-train, and this time took good care that it should reach him safely. With these guns he now

hammered a breach near St. John's Gate and hurled forward 10,000 men to storm it. The deadly struggle for supremacy that ensued has been recorded in song and story and won undying fame for the heroic defenders. The very women joined in repulsing the attack, as we have mentioned already in describing the Siege of Derry. They rushed into the thick of the fight along with their brothers and fathers and husbands, the heroic townsmen, and hurled stones and bottles and bricks at the enemy.

“ The women fought before the men ;  
Each man became a match for ten ;  
And back they drove the foemen then  
From Limerick on the azure river.”

The blacksmith fought with his sledgehammer, the butcher with his cleaver or caught up the pike or musket of the fainting, bleeding Irish soldier. The Williamites got into the streets, but of those who did few got out again. The resistance was heroic and fierce in the extreme. Back the English, Dutch, Danes, Prussians, French Huguenots, and other heterogeneous constituents of William's army were hurled with dreadful loss. The Brandenburg regiment, a Prussian one, had captured the Black Battery when a mine set by Sarsfield was sprung under their feet and blew up half their number.

For four hours on end that terrible fight was waged, and over 2,000 of William's proud army were either killed or wounded in it.

William had had enough of Limerick, and three days later he raised the siege and marched away to Water-

ford, whence he sailed for England, leaving the prosecution of the war to others.

Sarsfield was not exactly a handsome man, and there is something inexpressibly sad in his portrayed countenance as we know it. It is this sadness which, perhaps, detracts from his good looks, and makes us deem him not handsome, for the features are regular and good, the eyes large and bold, the nose aquiline, the mouth and chin firm. Like Owen Roe O'Neill, he suffered from over-unobtrusiveness, unwillingness to thrust himself forward, out of a mistaken sense of modesty.

## CHAPTER XIX.

HOW THEY HELD THE BRIDGE AT ATHLONE —AUGHRIM.  
—THE TREATY OF LIMERICK.

Churchill, who afterwards achieved such renown on the continent as the Duke of Marlborough, the future victor of Blenheim, Ramillies, etc., now took command of the Williamite forces in Ireland. At the head of 16,000 men he forced Cork to surrender on honourable terms, and likewise Kinsale. Tyrconnell now unfortunately returned from France, and the brave Sarsfield was superseded in the command of the Jacobites by General St. Ruth, a very capable but very bumptious commander. General Ginkle had succeeded Churchill at the head of the Williamite forces. The two armies met at Athlone, the English 18,000 strong, the Irish 20,000.

The Shannon divides the town of Athlone in two, and the one in Leinster was called the English town, and that on the Connaught side, the Irish town. By dint of heavy cannonading, Ginkle drove the overweening St. Ruth out of the English town and got possession of it. The town, however, was left in ruins and flames, and the Irish broke down the bridge connecting it with the Irish town. Covered by their superior artillery, the Williamites contrived to throw some beams over the



broken arches and partially span the gap. But very little more planking and a passage across the river would be available for their army to cross.

A sergeant of Maxwell's Irish dragoons, named Costume, sprang from the ranks. "Are there ten men here who will die with me for Ireland?"

Ten! A hundred and more offered. But Sergeant Costume would only have ten men at a time.

"Encasing themselves in complete armour," and armed with axes, the gallant eleven rushed from behind their breastwork on to the newly laid beams and vigorously hewed and hacked at these. The whole Leinster bank of the river wreathed itself in smoke instantly and the bridgehead was swept by a hurricane of bullets from muskets and grapeshot from cannon. Riddled like sieves the heroic Costume and his ten equally gallant companions fell to rise no more. Some of the beams had gone, but the eleven had perished to a man.

Again a hero sprang from the ranks and called on ten others to follow him. Again eleven men clad in armour bounded on to that death-swept bridge and daring the tornado of lead and iron pelting around, hewed at the timbers. Nine fell but the other two completed the work of destruction—sent the last beam tumbling into the river, and then regained the shelter of the entrenchments, amid the admiring and triumphant huzzas of their comrades.

It was a feat worthy to be recorded with that of far-famed Thermopylae, where Leonidas the Greek and his 300 fell holding the pass against a whole host of Persians; it stands parallel with that exploit immor-

talised by the English writer Macaulay, "How Horatius kept the bridge in the brave days of old."

Let me second A. M. Sullivan's lament that no memorial has ever been erected to the memory of the heroic Costume and his companions.

But their valiant self-sacrifice was unavailing after all. Ginkle, who appears to have been a greater commander than King William himself, threw a body of troops across the river below the bridge and took the Irish town also, chiefly through St. Ruth's culpable carelessness and over-confidence. He was jealous of Sarsfield and shared no counsel with him, though the latter was his second-in-command. The Irish lost 1,000 men at Athlone and fell back on Aughrim, near Ballinasloe.

Ginkle's force had now swollen to 26,000 men and he was better equipped than ever with artillery. He found the Irish posted on a strong situation with a bog on either hand and the centre on a hill, called Kilcommodon. It was the 12th of July, 1691. There were two causeways across the morass in front, and Ginkle attempted to carry these by an assault in force. He was driven back with heavy loss. But again the jealous and vain St. Ruth had not taken Sarsfield into his plans, and had relegated that brave and capable officer to the subordinate position of commander of the cavalry reserve, posting him in the rear behind the hill "with strict orders to remain there. . . . On that eventful day the greatest soldier of the Irish race was thus condemned to inglorious inactivity." (D'Alton.)

Defeated and terribly cut up, the English were in full retreat and St. Ruth was about to give the order for a general advance, when a cannon ball "took his

head away clean by the neck." A panic immediately set in, and the first intimation Sarsfield had of his leader's death was seeing, with consternation and amazement, the whole army breaking up like a house of cards and flying back down the hill towards him. All he could do was to cover the retreat, and this he did to the best of his power. Nevertheless, over 5,000 Irish fell in that awful rout, while the English and their allies lost about 2,000.

Galway surrendered on honourable terms to the victors ; and Ginkle marched on and invested Limerick, the last city left to the Jacobites and into which the still unbeaten Sarsfield had thrown himself with the remnant of his forces.

On the 25th August, the siege opened with a terrific bombardment, and a breach was effected in the wall of the English town. Ginkle, however, remembering King William's awful repulse, feared to attempt to enter it. Sarsfield endeavoured to get 4,000 horses into the city but was unable to do so, and a sortie was repulsed with heavy loss. A traitor in the garrison, one Henry Luttrell, betrayed the passage over the Shannon, and, throwing a pontoon bridge across in the night at the point, Ginkle took up a position on the Clare side of the river, completely surrounding the city.

Sarsfield intercepted a letter from Luttrell to Ginkle and arrested the traitor, though they were intimate friends. Ginkle now offered conditions, and, Sarsfield approving these, a truce was made, and on the 3rd of October, the city surrendered on honourable terms.

The famous treaty of Limerick was signed by Sarsfield

on a large boulder or slab of stone, which still stands at the memorable spot, marking it. No one goes to Limerick without seeing the "Treaty Stone." It stands on a carved pedestal ascended by three or four flat stone steps and bearing an inscription. The stone itself is a rough, unhewn mass, chipped by relic-hunters through the centuries since.

A few days after the capitulation, a French fleet arrived with reinforcements for Sarsfield of 3,000 men and 10,000 stand of arms, with ammunition and provisions. But this help came too late. Ginkle was in terror that Sarsfield, thus reinforced, would tear up the treaty, disclaim it; but the gallant Irish general, true to foe as well as friend, only said mournfully :

"Too late ! The treaty is signed. We have pledged our honour and the honour of Ireland. Though a hundred thousand Frenchmen were here to help us now, we must keep our plighted troth."

And so to the number of 14,000 infantry with colours flying, drums beating, and matches alight, the garrison of Limerick marched proudly out through the lines of their silent if triumphant foes.

By the Treaty the Irish were to enjoy full civil and religious liberty, and those who had fought for James II. to retain their estates and merely be required to take an oath of allegiance to King William III. instead of the oath of supremacy, which was particularly obnoxious to Catholics. Furthermore, all Irish soldiers who wished to go should be allowed a free passage to France.

King William was not a bad man. Had he had his way no doubt he would have brought peace and happiness to Ireland. He meant to faithfully keep the promises



he made, but his partisans would not allow him to do so. The English Parliament did not intend for one moment to abide by the conditions of the Treaty of Limerick, but to break them at the first chance in the selfish interests of all of their way of thinking settled in the land.

William, too, was anxious not to lose this splendid fighting material that under Sarsfield had given him such trouble to subdue, and Ginkle was instructed to hold out promises of preferment to those Irish soldiers who would enlist under his banner.

The 14,000 Irish infantry had filed, "into the great green meadow on the Clare bank of the Shannon," says Grant, "Printed copies of Ginkle's proclamation were scattered thickly about, and many British officers went through the ranks, imploring the men not to ruin themselves and describing to them the advantages which the soldiers of King William enjoyed. But soon the moment for decision came. They were ordered to march past in review order. . . . Shirtless and shoeless they might be then, but their hearts were stout and true. First marched the Royal Regiment of Ireland, 1,400 strong, and all save seven passed the fatal point, preferring exile with their king to relinquishing the faith of their fathers." (Grant.)

In all only 1,046 men out of the 14,000 elected to join the British army, 2,000 decided to retire to their homes, and a solid 11,000, with Sarsfield at their head, arrayed themselves beneath the banners of the French under the Count de Chateau-Renaud.

Altogether, 19,000 Irish troops set sail for France, under Sarsfield, Wauchope, and their gallant French

ally at Limerick, D'Usson; and no sooner were the English colonists thus safe from their vengeance than the Treaty of Limerick was violated, as we have said. No faith was to be kept with the Irish, against whom worse penal laws than ever were now passed by the English Parliament at the demand of the English and Scotch settlers and for the unjust benefit of these. Some of the Protestant Bishops protested, to their credit be it said, against this infamous conduct, but their expostulation was to no purpose. The cruellest laws were passed against the Catholics, so that it would seem to have been the vengeance of cowards, who deemed themselves safe now from those 19,000 Irish "swordsmen" who had gone into exile.

On those horrid Penal laws we will just briefly touch, for our province in this book is not to depress or sadden the reader but to inspire him with admiration for the glory and romance of his country. Still, let us point out that there is glory and romance in heroic suffering equally as in seeking "the bubble reputation e'en at the cannon's mouth"; glory and romance in fortitude under great privation and trial, as well as in charging to victory on the battlefield. And no nation has come through the furnace of dire suffering so bravely as the Irish race. Fire tempers the steel; so too, trial and suffering ennoble the heart and spirit, not triumph and the tyranny that continuous triumph engenders.

Under the Penal Laws all Catholic prelates, clergy and monks had to quit the country by the 1st of May, 1698; a Protestant woman marrying a Catholic lost all her property which went to her next Protestant heir; a priest or minister marrying such a couple would be

imprisoned for a year and fined £20 ; no Catholic could become a lawyer, a doctor, or a member of Parliament, nor yet send his children abroad for education, although no Catholic could be a school-teacher ; no Catholic could buy land or possess a horse worth more than £5.

What happened ? The Irish remained staunch to their religion through all " this inhuman tyranny—the blackest known to history." In lonely caves and remote glens the people met in secret to worship God according to their persecuted religion, and often priest and people were attacked by the soldiery there, when the priest was butchered on the altar with many of his faithful and devoted flock.

A cruel blow, too, was dealt at Irish trade At the instance of the English traders, in 1699, the English Parliament destroyed the Irish woollen industry, prohibiting altogether the export of wool from Ireland, throwing 40,000 people out of employment and reducing them to absolute ruin.

The consequence of all this brutal persecution and injustice was that the country was overrun more than ever by bands of rapparees or tories. Bands of armed men went abroad at night, houghing cattle, mutilating sheep, and terrorising or murdering English settlers in lonely farms.

But let us leave this picture of savage injustice and equally savage reprisal, of cruel persecution, and a noble, suffering, patient people, and betake ourselves to the shores of France in the wake of the Irish " swordsmen "

## PART VII.

### THE IRISH BRIGADE.

Oh, Erin ! In thine hour of need,  
Thy warriors wandered o'er the earth  
For others' liberties they bled,  
Nor guarded the land that gave them birth ;  
In foreign field it was their doom  
To seek—their fame ; to find—their tomb

" Oh, Erin ! " by JOHN D'ALTON.

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" Now England, now thy bull-dog courage show—  
That courage ever claimed for thee alone ;  
This is no weak assault, no wavering foe—  
The Irish wolf-dog at thy throat has flown ;  
Though many a time his fangs have shed thy blood  
When starved, and scourged, and kept upon the chain  
On equal terms he ne'er till now has stood  
Before thee thus upon the battle plain."

" The Battle of Fontenoy," by W. J. CORBET, M.P.





## CHAPTER XX.

## SARSFIELD'S DEATH.—HOW THE " WILD GEESE " SAVED CREMONA.

The 19,000 Irish soldiers who had sailed for France " were joined by many others, who in the years and wars that were to follow have made the very name of the Irish Brigade of France synonymous with all that is glorious and gallant."

In 1692 there were no less than 30,000 Irish soldiers in France, and they were promptly organised into what was known as the Irish Brigade. It consisted of two troops of horse guards, two regiments of foot guards, two regiments of dismounted dragoons, eight regiments of foot, and three independent companies. Sarsfield commanded the second troop of horse guards and the Duke of Berwick the first.

Almost immediately the Brigade were in action against their old Williamite foes, and their first battle was a victory over these, the battle of Steinkirk, where William III. of England was utterly defeated by the French under Marshal Luxembourg, who publicly thanked Sarsfield and his Irish cavalry for his share in the dashing charge that bore all before it.

But alas ! on July 29th, 1693, was fought the battle of Landen, where again, although the English were

beaten, after a most stubborn fight, the gallant Sarsfield was struck down by a musket ball at the head of his men, in the hour of victory. He fell from his horse mortally wounded, but lingered some days, when he died.

As he lay on the battle-field with the shouts of his victorious comrades ringing in his ears, the shouts that once again told him the English were falling back, beaten and discomfited, he put his hand to his breast as if to staunch the wound, and, drawing it away covered with blood, looked at it sorrowfully and said :

“ Oh ! That this were for Ireland ! ”

“ History,” says Thomas Davis, “ records no nobler saying.”

A fine and inspiring statue of Patrick Sarsfield, than which there is no nobler name on Ireland's long roll of heroic spirits, stands in that city which he twice so gallantly defended against his country's foes, and the name of which must ever be associated with his own. When one thinks of Sarsfield one thinks of Limerick, and *vice versa*. The statue represents him in the uniform of the period in heroic pose with sword and arm extended, the light of battle in his eyes and face, leading on his men to victory. It stands close by the Black Battery where the Prussian Brandenburgers were almost annihilated by the exploding mine.

After Sarsfield's death, the most famous officer of the Irish Brigade was Donal O'Brien, Lord Clare. Thomas Davis has justly celebrated “ Clare's Dragoons.” But this splendid body of horse had no share in the next most brilliant feat of the Brigade. We refer to “ the world-famous repulse of the attack on Cremona ” Of

that unparalleled feat, James Grant gives a full and exhaustive account in his "British Battles on Land and Sea," and thus begins the chapter: "Though they were not serving under the British flag, the defence of Cremona by the Irish was one of the most brilliant deeds performed at the opening of the eighteenth century."

This was the work of the "Old Brigade," Mountcashel's, who had all along been engaged in the Italian campaign and had not fought William at the Boyne or Limerick.

Marshal Villeroy lay in comfortable, too comfortable quarters, with his army, in the well fortified city of Cremona, on the banks of the Po River. There were 4,000 troops in the place, of whom only 600 were Irish under Colonels Dillon and Burke. Prince Eugene and the Austrians were far away, and the city believed itself safe from attack. But one Cassoli, an Italian priest, having no love for the French, entered into correspondence with Prince Eugene of Savoy, and offered to deliver the place into Austrian hands. Father Cassoli lived near the gate of St. Margaret which, being disused, had been bricked up. An old Roman sewer, broad and lofty, passed under the city walls, too, just there, and came up under Father Cassoli's house.

On the night of February 2nd, 1702, Cassoli secretly admitted a party of Austrian soldiers, disguised as artisans, through this sewer into his house. They promptly broke down the green masonry of the adjoining gate, and, like a living flood, in poured Prince Eugene's army, horse and foot, which had crept up to the walls without, undetected by the French who were keeping most indifferent guard.



The night was bitterly cold and sleeting and snowing. Dispersing quickly through the various avenues, the Austrians proceeded to possess themselves of every post of vantage and surprise the sleeping French. At the Po gate, close by, was a guard of 35 Irishmen, the only guard apparently keeping anything like proper watch in the whole city, for their officer, Major Daniel O'Mahony was a great martinet or disciplinarian. The 35 promptly fired on the on-coming Imperialists, and then took refuge behind a stockade where they were invulnerable, and against which their assailants in vain raged. Half the 35 thrust their bayonets between the palisades, while their comrades reloaded. They poured in volley after volley, hurling back Count de Merci and his Austrian grenadiers, as well as an attack from 250 dragoons.

The firing aroused the French everywhere. But as they turned out many of them were shot down and cut to pieces by the Austrians, now swarming—horse and foot—through every street. Marshal Villeroy, rushing out of his hotel, was captured by an Irish officer in the Austrian service, a Captain McDonnell, a Mayo man. Frantically the Marshal offered McDonnell 10,000 pistoles, a pension of 2,000 crowns annually and the command of a French cavalry regiment if he would release him.

But Captain McDonnell, though he had nothing to live on but his pay as a captain, proudly replied to these tempting offers:

“Monsieur, I prefer honour to fortune, and shall maintain my honour untarnished by any such treachery as you desire to seduce me into. You are my prisoner,

Monsieur, and as such it is my duty to deliver you up to those I serve, and I will certainly perform that duty."

The check at the Po gate enabled the rest of the Irish, the two battalions of Dillon and Burke to turn out and come to the relief of their guard. Major O'Mahony made them turn out only half dressed, in spite of the cold and sleet. In shirts and trousers, with their muskets and bayonets, the Irishmen charged Count de Merci and drove him back, then turned two guns on the Imperialists and cleared the street.

Prince de Vaudemont, one of Eugene's lieutenants, was outside the Po gate with 2,000 cavalry and 3,000 infantry, but through De Merci's set-back he could not get into the city, and the Irish at the gate now broke down the bridge outside and effectually barred his hopes of entering. Some of the French under the Count Revel rallied and managed to recover a post in another part of the city, from which they began to slowly drive back the Austrians.

In desperation, Prince Eugene hurled cavalry and foot in succession against the Irish 600 at the Po gate. But these held all the approaches thither and successfully flung back every attempt to reach it. Vaudemont was helpless with his 5,000 on the other side. Eugene sent McDonnell to try and induce his fellow-Irishmen to surrender on promise of a large sum of money and service under himself at higher pay.

O'Mahony, enraged at such an infamous proposal, arrested McDonnell, saying he had no right to attempt to thus suborn loyal men. Eugene then tried to induce Villeroy, his prisoner, to send a message to the Irish to lay down their arms.

“ I am no longer their general, and may not,” smilingly answered Villeroy.

Count Revel managed to communicate with O’Mahony, and directed the Irish to try and cut their way through the foe to his assistance. Although the houses lining the streets were filled with Austrian marksmen, the Irish almost forced their way through, and at last, after eight hours’ incessant fighting, finding it impossible to hold the city, Prince Eugene withdrew his troops out of the gate by which he had entered. He carried off Marshal Villeroy and about 500 French officers and men whom he had taken prisoners, but he left more than 2,000 of his own troops dead in the streets.

The Irish had saved Cremona, but at heavy loss to themselves. Of their brave 600, they lost 239 dead or prisoners. Burke’s regiment lost 16 officers and 92 soldiers, while Dillon’s regiment, led by the gallant O’Mahony, lost 13 officers and 118 rank and file.

Count de Revel fell on O’Mahony’s neck and kissed him there in the corpse-strewn public square where they met; then sent him to bear the news of his glorious exploit to Louis XIV. The Grand Monarque received O’Mahony with high honour and created him a colonel and a count of France, with a pension, and sent special thanks to the two Irish regiments through him, raising their pay forthwith.

Count O’Mahony subsequently rose to the rank of Major-General, and achieved further distinction at Almanza and other places.

At Blenheim, although the English under Marlborough defeated the French, the Irish covered themselves with



glory by cutting a German regiment to pieces, and Clare's Dragoons sustained the retreat. The gallant Lord Clare, however, was killed, receiving nine wounds in the still more disastrous defeat of Ramillies.



## CHAPTER XXI.

## LACY AND WOGAN.—THE CROWNING VICTORY OF FONTENOY.—COUNT LALLY.

But not all the "Wild Geese," as these Irish exiles were affectionately called in Ireland, fought for France, as we have shown in the case of Captain MacDonnell, who was in the Austrian service. Field-Marshal Count Peter Lacy, for instance, also won lasting fame in Russia. He had taken part in the siege of Limerick and accompanied Sarsfield to France. He then joined the service of Peter the Great and fought against the Swedes, being brigadier-general at the famous battle of Pultowa, where Charles XII. of Sweden was crushed. Later, he was made General-in-Chief of Russian infantry, and next we find him fighting against the Poles and placing a new king on the throne of that country. In 1737, he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army and conducted campaigns against the Khan of the Crimea and the Swedes respectively, eventually dying peacefully in his bed at the age of 73, on his estates in Livonia.

In the Spanish service, O'Donnells, O'Neills, O'Reillys, and Blakes and O'Farrells rose to eminence, and there were no less than five Irish regiments at one time.

Another of the famous Irish exiles at this period

was Chevalier Charles Wogan, who took part in the Elder Pretender's or "First Jacobite" Rising of 1715 in England. He was captured at Preston, but escaped with half a dozen others from Newgate Gaol in the heart of London, by a bold dash overpowering the guards and throwing open the gates. In 1718, the Pretender, or James III., was to marry Princess Maria Clementina Sobieski, grand-daughter of the famous Polish patriot king, John Sobieski, a most lovely woman, as her portraits testify. She eventually married James and became the mother of "Bonnie Prince Charlie," the "Young Pretender."

But it was England's interest to prevent the proposed match, and the Princess Clementina was arrested with her mother by the Austrian Emperor at the instance of England and imprisoned at Innsbruck. Wogan determined to effect her release, and with three brother Irish officers, Major Gaydon, Captain O'Toole and Captain John Misset, with the wife and maid of the last-mentioned, set out disguised for Innsbruck, using forged passports.

Arrived at Innsbruck, Wogan contrived to pass a letter in to the princess, and the escape was arranged for April 27th, 1719. On that night Mrs. Misset's maid changed clothes with the princess, who was supposed to be confined to her bed with illness, and now stole out of the castle in the midst of a storm of hail and snow. Wogan and his companions were waiting outside with a postchaise and horses handy. Away they galloped at top speed through the night, the princess and Mrs. Misset in the chaise, Gaydon driving, and Wogan riding alongside, with O'Toole and Misset following at some

distance to intercept any one carrying tidings of the escape or any pursuit. They made for Rome, where Clementina married James.

Wogan and his companions were created Roman senators by the Pope, an honour hitherto reserved for royal personages and men of distinguished bravery or merit. Wogan afterwards fought against the Moors and died in 1747, a governor of one of the Spanish provinces

"The crowning victory of the Irish Brigade, the brightest star in the glittering firmament of their military glory" (T. McCarthy), was FONTENOY. Who of Irish blood has not heard of it? It is "a name which to this day thrills the Irish heart with pride," wrote A. M. Sullivan; and, as John Mitchel said, "it was an event in the history of Ireland."

On May 11th, 1745, the English and their allies, to the number of 55,000 men, faced the French under Marshal Saxe and King Louis XV. in person, numbering 40,000 at Fontenoy, a small village near Tournay, on the left bank of the Scheldt. The Duke of Cumberland, King George's brutal son, known as the "Butcher of Culloden" afterwards, for his cruelty to the followers of Bonnie Prince Charlie, was in command of the English and their allies. The French had been besieging Tournay and the Allies were marching to relieve it.

All the Irish regiments in the French service—the entire Irish Brigade, strange to say—were present, under Charles O'Brien, Lord Clare and Earl of Thomond. The Dutch attacked the French right at St. Antoine, and the English and Hanoverians the French centre and left. On the right the Dutch were driven back; but

Cumberland formed his division into a solid column or phalanx of 15,000 men, with seven cannon in its front, and as many on either flank, and thus, marching steadily forward, with regular volleys forced his way, in spite of a withering fire, past all the redoubts right up to and into the French centre. Every attempt on the part of the French cavalry and infantry to break up or stop the progress of that solid column of English and Germans was vain. Broken and disordered, the finest troops of France had to recoil before the merciless fire of the English cannon and the steady volleys from its front and flanks.

All seemed lost, many of the French troops were already in flight, and King Louis was preparing to seek his own safety, when Colonel Lally of the Irish Brigade came galloping up to the Duke de Richelieu, a royal favourite, and suggested that four guns held in reserve be used to batter in the head of the English column and then that the Irish Brigade charge the enemy in flank, backed up by the French cavalry.

Richelieu carried the suggestion to Marshal Saxe, who instantly acted upon it, and word was sent to Lord Clare to charge. Only the Irish foot took part in the charge, to the number of nearly 6,000 men ; the cavalry were elsewhere with the French horse. The English formed the right of the phalanx, the Hanoverians the left, and it was against the right flank that the Irish Brigade were flung. Thus, by a strange coincidence, the old-time foes met once again in a most decisive struggle.

Clad in scarlet uniforms with white breeches, the seven regiments of Irishmen advanced as if on parade,



reserving their fire until the order to charge was given. Then, pouring in a well-delivered volley from every musket which sent the English tumbling over each other in dozens, they closed with the bayonet, to the thunderous shout of :

“ Cuimhnigidh ar Luimneac agus fheile na Sassenach !  
 (“ Remember Limerick and British faith or perfidy ! ” )

Terrific was the impact ; and like water, the English broke before the Irish bayonets in spite of the desperate efforts of their officers to hold them together. “ Through shattered ranks and sever’d files and trampled flags,” the Irish tore, sweeping all before them. The English were hurled back on the Hanoverians, throwing them into confusion ; and like a child’s sand castle before an inrush of the tide, or a house of cards with its foundations knocked away, the whole mighty and hitherto invincible column of 15,000 men crumpled up, fell to pieces, was swept together confusedly and away back, down the hillside it had so proudly mounted, leaving a dreadful littered track of dead and dying, lost cannon, banners, drums, muskets, accoutrements, and carriages. 15 of the 20 cannons were captured. These were turned upon the tumbling, disordered, fleeing masses, adding to their panic. The French cavalry “ dashed in upon their track ” and the rout was complete.

In ten minutes it was all over ; and, as Thomas Davis wrote—

“ On Fontenoy, on Fontenoy, like eagles in the sun,  
With bloody plumes the Irish stand—the field is fought  
and won ! ”

But the heavy fire maintained by the English upon the Brigade when advancing to the charge cost it dear—

98 officers and 400 men killed and wounded. The French lost 7,000 and the Allies 21,000, of which last number the English lost nearly 8,000 killed and wounded, and more than 2,000 prisoners, so that the Irish loss was very insignificant after all, compared with that of their hereditary foes.

“The Duke of Cumberland was never able to face the enemy again” (Grant); and Ghent, Bruges, Ostend and Oudenarde at once surrendered to the French. King Louis rode down to the bivouac of the Irish that night and thanked them personally, and when the English King, George II., heard of the defeat of his army by the Irish exiles, “he uttered that memorable imprecation on the penal code—‘Cursed be the laws which deprive me of such subjects!’” When Bonnie Prince Charlie drew his sword before the disastrous fight of Culloden, he cried: “Come, gentlemen, let us give Cumberland another Fontenoy!”

It was Fontenoy, too, which encouraged Prince Charlie to make his bold and romantic attempt to recover the lost crown of his grandfather. His chief of command was Colonel O’Sullivan, and Irishmen helped him with both money and a ship.

Colonel Count Lally-Tollendal, who had so distinguished himself at Fontenoy, achieved still greater renown. His family had come from Galway. Born in 1702, he was the son of Sir Gerald Lally who had fought under Sarsfield and gone into exile after Limerick. He tried to raise an army for Bonnie Prince Charlie, and, on the collapse of the latter’s “rising,” he went to India. In 1758, he was commander-in-chief of the French possessions there, and did his best to drive the

English out of the country. Had he been well supported, he might have done so. As it was, hampered and betrayed by his French comrades-in-arms, deserted by the French Government at home, he was defeated by the English at Wandewash and subsequently obliged to surrender Pondicherry, which town nevertheless he gallantly defended until starving.

On his return to France his powerful enemies contrived to have him thrown into the Bastille, and eventually condemned and executed. In 1778, however, Louis XVI. cancelled the decree of attainder against him as unjust and illegal, and restored to his son the honours he had been deprived of.

Colonel Count Daniel O'Connell, the Liberator's uncle, was the last distinguished officer of the Irish Brigade, which was disbanded by the French Republic in 1792 because it had remained faithful to the French royal family. In that same year it had been presented by the Bourbon prince, who afterwards became Louis XVIII., with a flag bearing an Irish harp and the words "1692-1792, *Semper et Ubique fidelis*" (Ever and everywhere faithful.)

## PART VIII.

### THE DAYS OF GRATTAN.

The soggarths led, the pikemen fought  
Like lions brought to bay,  
And Wexford proved her prowess well,  
In many a bloody fray,  
Where wronged and wronger foot to foot,  
In deadly grip was seen,  
And England's hated red went down  
Before the Irish green.

"The Priests of Ninety-Eight," by REV. P. M. FURLONG.

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At the Siege of Ross did my father fall,  
And at Gorey my loving brothers all,  
I am the last of my name and race,  
And I go to Wexford to take their place.

"The Croppy Boy," by CARROLL MALONE.





## CHAPTER XXII.

THUROT'S RAID.—THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS.—GRATTAN  
AND FLOOD.

About the middle of the eighteenth century, England was alarmed by rumours of a threatened French invasion, and sure enough a daring French commodore, named François Thurot, but who was really an Irishman named O'Farrell, continually ravaged the British coasts, until his "name was a terror and byword from south of Berwick to north of Caithness." He was called "The Corsair" and he swept British shipping from the North Sea.

"This man's name became a terror to the merchants of Britain," wrote Smollett, "for his valour was not more remarkable in battle than his conduct in eluding the British cruisers. . . . It must be likewise owned . . . that this bold mariner, though destitute of the advantages of birth, was remarkably distinguished by his generosity and compassion to those who had the misfortune to fall into his power, and that his deportment in every respect entitled him to more honourable rank in the service of his country."

With the *Friponne*, a corvette, he captured "upwards of sixty" English merchant ships. He was then given two frigates and two corvettes, and with this little

squadron of five ships he infested the coast of Scotland in May, 1758. Off Leith, with two ships, he fought an English squadron of four all most heavily armed, and left it so badly mauled that it could hardly crawl into port. Covered with glory by this and other successes, he was presented by King Louis XV. to Madame de Pompadour, and he was entrusted with another squadron of five frigates and a corvette, and despatched from Dunkirk to ravage the Irish coast.

One of his ships foundered at sea, and another, having to throw all its guns overboard to prevent doing the same, returned home. Thurot or O'Farrell, on the 21st of February, 1760, sailed into Carrickfergus Bay and, lying off Island Magee, of ill-repute in Irish history—notable for an alleged dreadful massacre by the Scotch Puritans in 1642,—he landed in his boats with 1,000 men, and captured the castle from Colonel Jennings and the garrison of 150 soldiers. The Corsair levied rations from the town and the merchants of Belfast, threatening to burn the latter place, and he carried off two vessels, laden with linen, from Belfast Lough.

After remaining at Carrickfergus for five days, he sailed off, and near the Isle of Man encountered the English fleet. A terrible conflict ensued, in which Thurot “fought with the fury of despair till a musket-ball stretched him on the deck in mortal agony.” By that time his little squadron was more or less disabled. He was only 33, and died in the arms of his wife, an English lady, who was with him. His body was buried on the Scottish coast, and we are told that the peasant girls of Wigton and Galloway “still remember him in

their songs as the gallant and gentle Thurret, for so they pronounce his name."

In 1761 first appeared the Whiteboys, gangs of "moonlighters" who wore linen frocks over their coats. They were suppressed by the military, but rose again in 1786 and 1822. The Insurrection Act was passed to deal with them in the latter year.

With the breaking out of the American War of Independence in 1775, a whole host of American and French privateers appeared off the coast, chief amongst them being Paul Jones, the terrible Scotchman flying the American flag, the young republic's first admiral. He also, after many depredations and exploits on the English and Scottish coasts, entered Carrickfergus Bay, where he fought and sank an English ship of war.

It was England's difficulty and Ireland's opportunity. With one voice the Irish people, Protestant and Catholic alike, demanded that, as England could not protect them against foreign attacks and possible invasion, they should be allowed to organise a volunteer force. Belfast immediately started enrolling men, and within a year there were some 40,000 men under arms. These were supplied them grudgingly by the Government, but they provided their own uniforms and elected their own officers. Among the officers were most of the public men of the day. The famous and patriotic Henry Grattan and the equally patriotic Henry Flood were colonels, while James Caulfield, the Earl of Charlemont, was given supreme command, with Lord Clanricarde and the Duke of Leinster in authority under him.

Henry Grattan, who was a member of parliament



for Charlemont at 29 years of age, and had raised himself to the position of leader of the "Patriot Party" by his wonderful oratorical powers, moved in 1778 an address to the King to the effect "that the state of Ireland required to be urgently considered." The Government opposed him, but before the year was out a Catholic Relief Bill was passed, allowing Catholics to take land on lease, "and to inherit land in the same way as Protestants."

Grattan also agitated for the removal of the restrictions and disabilities imposed on Irish trade by the English Parliament, and to obtain liberty of conscience for all Irishmen. He was, of course, a Protestant; otherwise he could not have sat in Parliament at that time. He was the son of the Recorder of Dublin.

The English manufacturers, those of Manchester, Liverpool and Bristol, "shouted themselves hoarse with rage and even threatened to take up arms," if the disabilities were removed. Thereupon the Volunteers, on the 4th of November, 1779, mustered round the statue of William III. in College Green, Dublin, and paraded with arms in their hands and cannon, bearing on the muzzles labels with the significant and patriotic legend, "Free trade or this." The cannon roared amid the acclamations of the onlookers. It was a grand day for Ireland. The captive warrior queen had raised her head proudly once again for all "her blood-clotted chain."

Henry Flood, who had accepted a place under the Government, supported the motion in Parliament with Hussey Burgh, the Prime Sergeant, and the Government had to consent to it as also to a second motion in both

Houses thanking the Volunteers for their patriotic conduct.

The address was sent to England, but an evasive reply was returned. Thereupon Grattan and Hussey Burgh carried a motion refusing any new taxes. The English Parliament yielded, and Irish exports were free.

But the Patriot Party were not yet satisfied. They were determined to win the absolute independence of the Irish Parliament from English control, and to this end the great Henry Grattan worked tooth and nail, joined now again by Henry Flood, who had thrown up his office under Government.

A great convention of the Ulster Volunteers was held in the Protestant Church of Dungannon on February 15th, 1782, and, amid the utmost enthusiasm, the national demands, as voiced by the immortal Grattan, were endorsed. The Dungannon Convention was followed, to Grattan's joy, by the repeal of still more of the harsh penal laws against Catholics. A Catholic might now have a horse worth more than £5, teach in school, etc.

The whole country was united in its resolution to be free and independent of England; and in the face of this determined attitude of the Irish people, backed, as it was by the unequivocal support of 100,000 armed and trained Volunteers, the English Government gave way, dreading, no doubt, that Ireland might follow the action of the lately revolted American colonies and break away by force otherwise.

On the 16th of May, 1782, the Duke of Portland, who was Lord Lieutenant, announced THE PARLIAMENTARY OR LEGISLATIVE INDEPENDENCE OF IRELAND.

The country went mad with joy ; but Flood, more circumspect and far-seeing than the generous-hearted Grattan, contended that the English Parliament still maintained its supremacy over the Irish Parliament and demanded that this supremacy be renounced by England. Grattan called him ungenerous and ungrateful, and they quarrelled bitterly, on which English statesmen must have rejoiced greatly, for united they were invincible, whereas now the country was divided by factionism. However, Flood won his point and forced England to pass the " Act of Renunciation," *renouncing its supremacy over the Irish Parliament and declaring it to be entirely free in matters of legislature and judicature.*

The Volunteer organisation, deprived now of its *raison d'être*, dwindled, and fell to pieces, most unhappily for later times. Grattan next advocated Catholic Emancipation, and Flood opposed it. With regard to this Irish Parliament the Commons consisted of 300 members, of whom 64 represented counties, and 172 were returned for boroughs, which were mostly pocket-boroughs, that is, they were owned by a few peers or wealthy gentlemen who bought and sold them, like articles of commerce, to place-hunters, and toadies. The people had very little voice in the election of their representatives at all.

In 1783, therefore, Flood brought in a Parliamentary Reform Bill to ensure popular representation, although it contained no suggestion of Catholic enfranchisement. The Volunteers supported the Bill and assembled in force at the Rotunda, whereupon the Commons rejected it on the score that it was presented " under the man-

date of a military convention." The Volunteers very weakly dissolved and did nothing, Lord Charlemont, their leader, not having in him the makings of a great spirit. "From that time forward the Volunteers ceased to influence public affairs." (Murphy.)

Flood retired from the Irish Parliament and went to England and was elected to the English House of Commons as member for Winchester. But he died shortly after in 1791.

Gangs of the worst type of Protestants, in 1784, drunken ruffians, calling themselves "Peep-o'-Day Boys," went about the country in the dead of night, or, as their name implied, just at dawn, visiting the houses of Catholics, and on the pretence of searching for arms, terrorising and maltreating the inhabitants. In self-defence the Catholic farmers banded themselves together under the name of "Defenders," and furious conflicts ensued, when any of the rival factions met. The worst fight was the so-called "Battle of the Diamond," in September, 1795, at the hamlet of that name in Armagh. Many "Defenders" were killed, and to commemorate this conflict the first Orange Lodge was formed immediately after, and so the Orangemen or Orange Society came into being.

Other secret societies about this time were the "Oakboys," and "the Hearts of Steel," or "Steelboys." These were Protestant farmers banding themselves together to resist the encroachments or exactions of landlords, for the most part. The Oakboys wore green branches of oak in their hats.



## CHAPTER XXIII.

WOLFE TONE AND THE "UNITED IRISHMEN."—THE  
FRENCH INVASION OF 1796.—"REMEMBER ORR."

Ireland had won a free and independent Parliament, thanks to Grattan and the Volunteers, and this Parliament is often referred to as "Grattan's Parliament." But, as we have already pointed out, it did not fairly represent the country. The great mass of the people, the Catholics, were not represented in it at all, a Catholic not being allowed to sit in it. And the Protestants were not fairly represented, either. The seats, as we explained in the preceding chapter, were mostly pocket boroughs, in the power of the great landholders and Ministers of the Crown, to give to their own tools. Very few even of the Protestant section of the population had votes at all. Moreover, the Government were all nominees of the English crown or English cabinet, and so really not much could be expected from such a venal legislature until sweeping alterations were made in it.

With a view to obtaining parliamentary reform, in the first place—to peacefully agitating for vote by ballot, household suffrage and the enfranchisement of Catholics as well as repeal of the penal laws against them, a young Protestant barrister, named Theobald Wolfe Tone, founded in Belfast a society that will ever

be linked with his name—the society of *United Irishmen*.

The fame of Wolfe Tone and the society he formed is world-wide. Tone was only 28 years of age at the time, and his portraits have familiarised us with his exceedingly handsome, manly, open, engaging countenance—the reflex of courage, frankness, generosity and nobility of soul.

He was a republican at heart, and a celebration of the French Revolution in July, 1791, in Belfast, with military pomp, by the armed volunteers and townspeople gave him the idea of his society, or at any rate of making use of the occasion for the advancement of its scheme.

He quickly gathered into the society, which was not at first a secret one—although all its members took a solemn oath to further its objects—such other since celebrated men of the time as Samuel Neilson (the proprietor of the "Northern Star" newspaper), Thomas Russell, James Napper Tandy, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, the Hon. Simon Butler, Dr. Drennan, Oliver Bond, William Sampson, etc., etc. All these gentlemen were Protestants, but the aim of the Society was to wholly eradicate religious differences among Irishmen and unite them all as brothers in the sacred cause of the welfare of their country. Consequently, a Catholic was readily admitted into the society; his creed was made no bar whatever to his admission. On the contrary, the society openly advocated the cause of Catholicism.

The membership, as it deserved, increased by leaps and bounds; Catholics and Protestants of the middle and lower classes joined it in thousands, and the Govern-

ment became alarmed, realising how formidable a united Irish nation would be.

First denouncing the society as seditious and arresting and imprisoning its most prominent members, the Executive at Dublin Castle then grudgingly passed a Convention Act, allowing Catholics to vote for members of Parliament and to occupy certain civil and military offices. This great concession was made to try and wean the Catholics from the society, to whose agitation really they owed it. Simon Butler, Oliver Bond, and Hamilton Rowan were all three arrested, and fined £500 and sentenced to terms of imprisonment as well, for presiding or speaking at meetings of the United Irishmen.

The result of this tyrannical attempt to suppress free speech was that the society became a secret revolutionary body, "pledged to obtain separation from England and a republican government."

Wolfe Tone, to avoid arrest, went first to America, and then to Paris, where he saw the heads of the French Republic and conspired with them for an invasion of Ireland, or rather for an expedition to be sent to help the Irish people to free themselves completely from England.

To effect this became Tone's life-work, and he met with considerable success. In 1796 the French Directory fitted out an armament of 43 ships of war, carrying 13,975 troops, officers and men, and arms, artillery and ammunition for 45,000 men, for the invasion of Ireland, putting it under the command of General Hoche. Had this officer lived he might have rivalled the great Napoleon, for he was one of the ablest and most tried generals in the French army. He was



Wolfe Tone

Lord Edward Fitzgerald

Robert Emmett





known as "the Pacificator of La Vendée," for when that particular part of France espoused the cause of the Bourbons and resisted the republicans with great success, he subdued it when others had most signally failed by combining military ability with humanity.

If the above formidable force had landed in Ireland, there can be no doubt that, for good or ill, it would have separated Ireland from England. But "man proposes and God disposes"; it was fated otherwise.

Wolfe Tone, elate with hope and triumph, sailed with the expedition, which left Brest on the 16th December, 1796. The weather was unpropitious. In the darkness first, and later in a fog, some of the ships became separated from the others. However, 35 made the coast of Kerry when a terrific gale arose and dispersed them. Most of them were blown out to sea, but 16 got safely into Bantry Bay. General Grouchy, Napoleon's Jonah\* later, as he was now apparently of the expedition, hesitated to land, although he had 6,500 men. Wolfe Tone, who was with him, begged of him to do so. The *Fraternité*, the flagship of the fleet, with the gallant Hoche and the Admiral on board, was not among the 16 ships in the bay. It had parted from the rest of the fleet the first night of the voyage.

Grouchy was at last induced to call a council of war, and this, to Tone's exceeding joy, decided the landing should take place next day. In the night the wind freshened to a violent gale again. The ships dragged their anchors, and were every one of them at last,

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\* Grouchy failed to turn up in time to help Napoleon at Waterloo, and lost him a previous fight as well through tardiness.

to Tone's despair, driven out to sea. The ships had to put back to France, where they arrived all so much disabled that the expedition had to be abandoned.

There were only 4,000 troops in all Munster at the time, and Grouchy's 6,500, had they landed overnight, instead of waiting for the morrow, must have been joined by the peasantry in great numbers and have "marched without hindrance to Cork . . . . and perhaps even to the capital."

At this time Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the brother of the Duke of Leinster, had taken the oath of the United Irishmen and was elected Commander-in-Chief of the military revolutionary organisation that was being rapidly formed. He had served in the English army in Canada where he achieved considerable distinction. Handsome, frank, and chivalrous, and endowed with all the advantages of high rank and noble lineage, he won the hearts of all with whom he came in contact, and his lofty patriotism, added to these qualities or recommendations, has likewise won him the lasting affection of the Irish people, amongst whom he is still familiarly known as "Lord Edward."

Associated with him on the Executive Directory of the Society were Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O'Connor and Dr. William James McNevin. There was a fifth member of this Directory, but who he was is apparently a secret that will never be solved. It is believed though, that he was Lord Cloncurry, another patriotic nobleman, who never openly acknowledged his connection with the society, but certainly approved and aided it. By the end of 1797, 500,000 men had been secretly enrolled in the society, and of these about

half were armed with pikes or muskets. The wearing of the hair cut or "cropped" close became the fashion with them, and so they were called by the soldiery "croppies," which name became synonymous for a rebel.

Informed of this by their numerous secret service agents and spies, the Government became panicstricken. The expedition under Hoche had already thoroughly alarmed them, and they now determined, by the foulest means possible, to cause a premature explosion of the insurrection that they saw coming and would have so much cause to dread. They knew that the indefatigable Wolfe Tone was leaving no stone unturned to bring about another armed invasion of Ireland, that he was eternally worrying Napoleon and Holland, then called the Batavian Republic, to fit out expeditions. Napoleon tricked Wolfe Tone, deceived him, and—paid the penalty at Waterloo; ay, and earlier, at the Battle of the Nile.

The Batavian Republic was as good as its promises to Tone. It fitted out a fleet of 26 vessels and 15,000 men for the invasion of Ireland, thanks to him and General Hoche, his great friend, and John Edward Lewins, another agent of the United Irishmen. This fleet sailed from the Texel under Admiral de Winter, but was attacked off Camperdown by an English fleet of equal or slightly superior force and defeated. "Never had the English seamen harder work than in subduing the almost equal gunnery and stubborn courage of the gallant Dutchmen on this memorable day." (Sanderson.)

Tone had despaired of the Texel fleet ever sailing and had rejoined his wife and children in Paris; and so



it sailed without him. The next blow that Tone suffered was the death in September of that same year of his warm-hearted friend, General Hoche.

It needed but the Batavian expedition to complete the panic and savage design of the English ministers, and, while they arrested the most prominent of the patriot leaders everywhere, they now let loose the soldiery, and particularly the yeomanry and militia, upon the unarmed and helpless people. Men, women and children were ill-used and tortured in a way that makes the blood run cold to read of, in a way that we care not to pollute our pages by narrating.

These uniformed ruffians were given full permission by the law, called " martial law," to treat the peasantry and people everywhere as they pleased, so as to try and goad them into rebellion. Was there ever a more diabolical scheme? Lord Castlereagh, one of the ministers, openly admitted that the Government had this object. We shall hear more of Castlereagh later, but we may say here that his end was—suicide.

So outrageously did the soldiers behave to even innocent and law-abiding people that the gallant Sir Ralph Abercrombie threw up his post of commander-in-chief of the forces in Ireland in disgust, while the heroic Sir John Moore, another Scotsman, appalled at the treatment of the people, exclaimed: " Were I an Irishman, I should be a rebel ! "

The Duke of Leinster also resigned the command of the Leinster militia by way of protest, and all decent men drew out of the ranks of both yeomanry and militia, so that, unfortunately, the very lowest of the low—drunken, inhuman savages beside whom the

French revolutionists were as lambs—got the upper hand and became general in the ranks of these two forces.

To this day, the yeomanry and militia of "'98" are execrated in Ireland more than the regulars, with the sole exception of two regiments of Hessians and another of Welsh fencible cavalry known as the Ancient Britons, who emulated their example. The Scotch regiments everywhere refused to have anything to do with such brutality, and one corps of Highlanders turned their backs on a particularly gross scene which may not be mentioned here.

It was made death, too, to even administer the United Irishmen's oath; and for this offence one, William Orr, was tried and hanged at Carrickfergus on the evidence of only one man, a soldier named Wheatly, in defiance of all the notions that one man's word is as good as another's in a court of law. The witness afterwards "declared the evidence he had given was false." "Remember Orr," became, like "Remember Mullagh-mast," of an earlier period, the watchword of the United Irishmen.

But for the precautions taken by the British Ministers in everywhere pouncing on the leaders of the revolutionary party, it is more than likely the Government would have overshot its mark in forcing on the rebellion. But, thanks to their host of informers and secret service agents, they were able to lay their hands at once, as we say, on pretty well all the popular chiefs. Oliver Bond, Addis Emmet, Dr. McNevin, Arthur O'Connor, McCann, Jackson, Sweetman and Father O'Coigley, were all arrested, but Lord Edward evaded capture and was

concealed from time to time by various freinds of the cause.

While thus in hiding, or, as it was called, "on his keeping," he appointed the 23rd of May for a general rising; and, to fill the places of those arrested, the Brothers Sheares, John and Henry, were elected members of the Executive Council.

## CHAPTER XXIV

THE CAPTURE OF LORD EDWARD.—“NINETY-EIGHT”  
—WEXFORD RISES.

A reward of £1,000 was offered for the arrest of Lord Edward; and at length, in May, a despicable wretch named Francis Higgins, a rogue and trickster who had raised himself from the gutter to the proprietorship of the “Freeman’s Journal,” and was known contemptuously as “the Sham Squire,” went to Major Sirr with information gleaned by him from a lawyer named Francis Magan.

This Magan was apparently in Higgins’s power; he had been a United Irishman, but had drawn out of the Society for prudent reasons. He was, however, trusted by the United men and had been taken into the secret of Lord Edward’s whereabouts. It was long kept a Government secret who the traitor was, and many innocent, true-hearted patriots were unjustly suspected, such as Samuel Neilson, and Murphy, in whose house Lord Edward was hiding.

The evening of the 18th May, 1798, Major Sirr, the town major, went to the house of Mr. Nicholas Murphy, a feather merchant, 153 Thomas Street, Dublin, and silently contrived an entrance. He had with him Major Swan and Captain Ryan, as well as a number of soldiers.



Swan and Ryan rushed upstairs into the bedroom where Lord Edward was reclining, half dressed, upon a bed, about to drink some tea. He was ill, having contracted sore throat and general debility.

Lord Edward at sight of the intruders sprang off the bed, and, weak and ill as he was, caught up a dagger he had under his pillow. Swan pulled out a pistol, and Lord Edward struck at him, wounding him in the hand and breast. Crying out that he was "murdered," Swan fired at the young nobleman. The shot missed. Captain Ryan now intervened with a sword cane, and Major Sirr, with the soldiers, came hurrying upon the scene.

Ryan grappled with Lord Edward and the two fell to the floor, Lord Edward severely wounded by thrusts from his assailant's weapon, but stabbing the latter repeatedly with his dagger. Lord Edward struggled to his feet, and Ryan and Swan, both on the floor, the former dying, clung to his legs. Major Sirr rushed in and shot at Lord Edward with a pistol, lodging several slugs in his right shoulder, whereupon, overcome with weakness and loss of blood, "the gallant Geraldine" fell back upon the bed, when he was overpowered by the soldiers and bound hand and foot.

In the hall downstairs he made another desperate bid for liberty, but was borne to the floor by a dozen soldiers and wounded in the neck with a bayonet. The news spread that Lord Edward was captured, and one Edward Rattigan, a young timber merchant, hastily collected a band of men and set upon the captors. But the arrival of a fresh body of troops enabled these to get their prisoner safely to Newgate Prison.

Lord Edward was married to one of the loveliest women of her time, the gentle Pamela, a grand-daughter of the Duke of Orleans, Philippe Egalité. They had met casually at a theatre in Paris. The play was "Lodoiska," and Lord Edward was introduced by a Mr. Stone. Lord Edward was stricken with love at first sight and proposed to her guardian for her the same night. They were married on December 21st, 1792, and during the six short years of their wedded life the young couple were devotedly attached to each other.

The portraits of Lord Edward may almost be mistaken for those of Robert Burns, the Scottish poet, owing to the resemblance in the pose of the head, the close-cut curling hair, and particularly the attire. Lord Edward had a strikingly open, frank, handsome countenance, in which enthusiasm and optimism are the prevailing expressions. The eyebrows were well arched, the eyes, large, eloquent, fearless, the forehead broad and high, and the nose a military aquiline and Roman combined, the mouth and chin firm, yet gentle-looking as a woman's.

His arrest, when all had hoped he would prove another Washington, was indeed a blow to the United Irishmen, and practically paralysed their action, happening, as it did, almost on the eve of the projected rising.

Samuel Neilson assembled a body of United men at night to storm Newgate and rescue Lord Edward, but he was captured as a suspect by the gaolers while reconnoitring, and his men waited in vain for his return.

Lord Edward died of his wounds a fortnight later, on the 4th June, 1798, while the rebellion was in full swing, and he lies buried in St. Werburgh's Protestant

Church, Dublin. The Brothers Sheares were arrested on May 21st, through the treachery of a pretended friend, Captain John Warneford Armstrong, of the Kildare militia, whose services as a military man they no doubt hoped would be useful in the outbreak.

General Lake had taken over the command of the royal forces and brought these up to the strength of 150,000 men. The United Irishmen had not intended to rise until they received French or other foreign aid in the shape of "the kernel or nucleus of an army," as Tone wanted, so as to enable the insurgents to become disciplined and used to arms. But the efforts of the Government to force an outbreak were successful. The exasperated people could endure no more of the brutalities practised upon them, as Lord Edward had seen, and, on the appointed day, the 23rd of May, there were risings everywhere over the country. Mostly they were miserable failures. The Dublin men, under two gentlemen named Ledwich and Keogh, were cut to pieces at Santry by Lord Roden's dragoons. Their purpose had been to seize Dublin castle and the artillery park at Chapelizod.

At Prosperous, however, the insurgents despatched the sentry, rushed into the guardroom and piked 12 men and shot Captain Swayne, afterwards firing the barracks, and destroying to a man a company of the hated North Cork Militia that was within it. Likewise, at Dunboyne, the peasantry ambushed a convoy of Scotch soldiers, slew them to a man also, and captured the baggage; while at Kilcullen the insurgents, under Dr. Esmonde, defeated a troop of dragoons with a loss of 22 men, but were afterwards attacked by a large

force of troops under General Dundas, at Kilcullen Bridge, and routed with a loss of 130 men. A detachment of British soldiers, stationed at the village of Clane, had to cut its way to Naas with considerable loss, and an attack on Naas was only repulsed with the loss to the King's troops of 30 men and two officers.

On the hill of Tara, "the old seat of Milesian royalty in Meath," several thousands of insurgents had mustered and the soldiers feared to attack them, and so resorted to a ruse. Several barrels of whisky were sent along the road and the foolish peasants, capturing these, and drinking the whisky, were then attacked by the military and defeated, but only after a hard struggle.

In other places, through lack of discipline and their own headstrong folly for the most part, the insurgents were also routed and with heavy loss, as at Carlow, where they "marched in a very noisy and disorderly manner" on the town and were mown down by a deadly fire, the garrison having had timely warning and being well intrenched in the houses lining the main street. On the Curragh of Kildare, Sir James Duff butchered 300 men who had laid down their arms. Wherever the soldiery triumphed, the slaughter of the unfortunate peasants "was out of all proportion to the resistance offered." No mercy was shown even to unarmed men.

Seeing his church of Boolavogue set on fire by the Orange yeomanry and his hapless parishioners fleeing from their blazing homes and being shot down mercilessly, Father John Murphy, a Catholic priest, started the revolt in Wexford, kindled a flame which was like to have consumed British supremacy in Ireland—com-



menced an insurrection, which, had it been better directed, must have triumphed and swept the English out of the country. Previous to this time Father Murphy had counselled the people to deliver up any weapons they possessed. Now, seeing that inaction or submission was no security, that the people's extermination seemed to be the design of the Government, he gathered some men together, armed with scythes, tied on the ends of poles, and pitchforks for the most part, and fell swiftly and suddenly upon the Camolin yeomanry, wholly destroying them with their acting commander, Lieutenant Bookey. This was on the 26th of May, 1798.

With the captured horses and arms, Father John and his men proceeded to the residence of Lord Mountnorris, "where all the arms were stored that had been taken from the people for months before. These were taken possession of," and the insurgents then bivouacked on Oulart Hill, eight miles from Wexford, and lit bonfires to rouse the country round.

Numbers of the peasantry flocked into the camp, and next morning Father John was at the head of 4,000 or 5,000 men. It was Whitsunday, and in the afternoon a detachment of the North Cork Militia, a most detested corps on account of its cruelty, with some yeoman cavalry, advanced against the camp. While the cavalry surrounded the hill to cut off the insurgents' escape, the infantry mounted to the attack.

The insurgents lay in a ditch or depression, well under cover, and, suddenly springing up, rushed down at headlong charge, overbearing the militia in the very shock of impact. In a few minutes they had killed the whole

detachment except Lieut.-Colonel Foote, a sergeant and three privates. Major Lombard was among the slain with four other officers. Colonel Foote escaped because he was in the rear and on horse-back, but he received pike wounds in the breast and arm. The yeoman cavalry fled without striking a blow, at the sight of the fate of the foot.

Another priest, Father Michael Murphy, of Ballycavan, now joined the insurgents, and, as the Rev. P. M. Furlong wrote in his poem, entitled "The Priests of Ninety-Eight,"

"They drew the green old banner forth and flung it to  
the light ;  
And Wexford heard the rallying cry and gathered  
in her might,  
And swore around uplifted cross until the latest breath  
To follow where her soggarths led—to victory or  
death."

With their numbers considerably augmented, the two Fathers Murphy now marched to Camolin, where they seized 80 stand of arms, and continuing on without meeting any opposition through Ferns, gaining recruits every step of the way, attacked Enniscorthy on the 28th of May. Led on by a popular gentleman farmer named John Rossiter, the peasantry eventually swept the regulars and North Cork Militia and yeomanry out of the town in headlong rout after more than three hours' action. The day was very hot. Nearly a third of the garrison were slain, including a captain and two lieutenants.

A number of "farmers, with long duck guns, practised marksmen from boyhood in shooting wild fowl," were

included in the peasant army. Father John proclaimed an Irish Republic in Enniscorthy, which town now "decked itself out in the rebel colours of green."

Father John Murphy, according to O'Connor Morris, was a "real leader . . . a true ruler of men, almost a born general. . . . He attacked the garrison in the place (Enniscorthy) with real military skill, making a flanking movement with vigour and effect." He is described by another authority as a man of forty-five years of age, light-complexioned, slightly bald, and about five feet nine inches in height, with a loud, ringing voice.

## CHAPTER XXV.

FURTHER PEASANT VICTORIES.—NEW ROSS.—ARKLOW.  
—VINEGAR HILL.—BALLYELLIS.

All Wexford was now practically in arms and pouring into the insurgent camp, and the two Fathers Murphy, joined by Father Clinch of Enniscorthy, determined to capture the county town. It was defended by a garrison of 1,200 men which had been reinforced by the fugitives from Enniscorthy. General Fawcett, commander of Duncannon Fort, sent a force to succour the garrison. On the 30th of May, the insurgents surprised this force at Forth or Three Rock Mountain, three miles from Wexford, killing a hundred of the troops and capturing two howitzers, some ammunition and prisoners. Lieutenant-Colonel Maxwell with a stronger force, coming up, attempted to retrieve the defeat, but the howitzers were turned on him and he retreated in haste and confusion, losing several men.

Under the nominal command of General Edward Roche, lately a sergeant of yeomanry, who had joined them, the insurgents advanced on Wexford, when the garrison fled in terror. Its flight might easily have been cut off. The whole strength of the county now, thirty thousand men, the insurgents formed three camps and three separate divisions, and decided to strike respec-



tively north, west and south-west ; a great mistake for, had they at once hurled their full force northward, they probably would have triumphed by weight of numbers. Father John Murphy, too, unhappily for their plans, retired from the position of commander-in-chief, and a Protestant barrister of landed property and considerable influence, named Beauchamp Bagenal Harvey, of Bargy Castle, took his place.

Harvey had no military knowledge, and his insignificant personality was also against him as a leader of an undisciplined peasant army. The two Fathers Murphy had already shown their ability, and Father John might have been to Ireland what "the illustrious Father Morelos" was to Mexico, her Washington or "Liberator." Matthew Keogh, a Protestant and a captain of the Sixth Regiment, who joined the insurgents, would also have been better fitted for the post of commander-in-chief on account of his military knowledge, instead of being made Governor of Wexford and thus doomed to useless inactivity.

On the 1st June, the northern division, advancing upon Gorey, was repulsed with a loss of nearly 100 men. The troops, encouraged by this success, then marched to attack the rebel camp, on Carrigrua Hill, but the insurgents formed an ambuscade and trapped the main body of the troops. The peasantry lined the hedges and thickets on either side of the road at Tubberneering or Clough, and, first pouring in a deadly fire, fell on with the pike. Colonel Walpole who was in command of the troops was shot dead, and his detachment, horse and foot, was cut to pieces in a few minutes with the loss of its three guns. The rear of the division, under

Colonel Cope, fell back rapidly, the rebels turning the three guns on it and punishing it severely. Father Philip Roche was the leader of the peasantry here.

Gorey was now captured by the insurgents, who decided to march on to Arklow.

The western division of the insurgents, encamped on Vinegar Hill, attacked Newtownbarry, under two gentlemen named Doyle and Redmond, and Father Kearns, on the 2nd June. The rebels stormed the town, but then very foolishly spread through it, and gave themselves up to drinking and jollification. The troops rallied, returned, and drove them out with a loss of 200 men. However, the Royalists had to abandon Newtownbarry the same day, and the peasant army occupied it.

On the 5th June, 1798, Bagenal Harvey, with the south-western division of this, advanced against New Ross. A gentleman named Furlong, sent forward to summon the town to surrender under a flag of truce, was shot dead by the English soldiers, whereupon, incensed at this violation of all the recognised laws of war, the insurgents, without waiting for orders, swarmed down upon the town "in one disorderly body, drove back the cavalry and infantry by the fierceness of their charge, and captured the cannon." The troops rallied in the heart of the town, but the insurgents fought a passage into it, "notwithstanding that many guns were planted in the cross lanes, to sweep the main street." The most desperate struggle took place at the Three-Bullet gate.

After some fierce fighting the troops "fled over the bridge with precipitation, to the Kilkenny side of the

Barrow " (Grant). The town was won, but with " fatal imprudence," the peasants acted the same as at Newtownbarry, dispersed through the town and began to drink. " Soon hundreds were imbecile and besotted with liquor." Major-General Johnson rallied his panic-stricken troops, brought them back to the scene, and, falling on the drunken rebels, drove them out in his turn, but not until half the town was on fire.

The rebels returned to the attack, and, by dogged fighting, won the centre of the town again when—will it be believed?—they repeated their folly, and once more began to drink. Again they were beaten out; a third time they penetrated, with obstinate bravery to the heart of the town, the firing continuing until night time when at last, wanting officers to direct them, they were finally driven out, after a most stubborn engagement of more than ten hours.

They left, one authority says, 2,600 killed and wounded behind them, and many of the wounded were deliberately burned to death or put to the sword in cold blood by the vengeful troops. Another account gives their loss only at 1,000 men, which is the more likely number, for the rebels actually engaged in the three assaults " at no time exceeded 5,000." For some unaccountable reason General Bagenal Harvey remained outside the town, resting on his arms with the main body of his army, and left all the fighting to a gallant youth, General John Kelly of Killann, contenting himself with sending forward only a small reinforcement under General Thomas Cloney. Had Kelly and Cloney only been supported, New Ross would have remained in the hands of the insurgents.

The Rev. James B. Dollard has commemorated Kelly of Killann and his dashing charge at New Ross in verse :

“ The hush before the battle,  
Wraps famed Three-Bullet Gate,  
And there, with matches burning,  
The English gunners wait.  
Grim wall and gaping cannon  
Defy the might of man—  
Not so ! with charging Wexford,  
And Kelly of Killann !

Like lightnings round Slieve Cailtha  
The flashing of his pikes !  
His charge like bolt from heaven  
Black Brandon's brow that strikes !  
The troops on earth ne'er mustered,  
His bristling front could scan  
And face with hearts unshaken,  
Fierce Kelly of Killann !

The gallant Kelly fell severely wounded in the third assault, and on this his followers gave way, Cloney covering the retreat admirably. The heavy loss of the insurgents was entirely due to their drunkenness, those who were sober suffering very little in the pursuit.

Naturally the peasantry were greatly dissatisfied after this disaster with Harvey's leadership, and he was called on to resign, when Father Philip Roche, a perfect giant of a man, who was the victor at Tubberneering and possessed unbounded influence, was elected in his place.

The garrison of New Ross had consisted of about 1,600 men, some of these being regular troops, supported



by a battery of field guns. The assailants were never, as we have said, more than 5,000. "The fight within the pent-in spaces was most desperate; the artillery in vain swept hundreds down, the best horsemen of England recoiled, beaten, before the serried forest of pikes or fell under the deadly hail of concealed sharpshooters."

Sir Richard Musgrave says "that such was their enthusiasm (that of the peasantry) that, though whole ranks of men were seen to fall, they were succeeded by others, who seemed to court the fate of their companions, by rushing on our troops with renovated ardour." Of the troops, 500 officers and men fell, including Lord Mountjoy, Colonel of the Dublin Militia, who was shot in the first onset.

"My curse upon all drinking—'twas that that brought  
us down;

It lost us Ross and Newtownbarry, and many another  
town."

Maddened by the troops' burning of a hospital containing a number of wounded insurgents at New Ross and the butchery of all peasants taken prisoners, with or without arms, some of the Wexfordmen set fire to a barn at Scullabogue and burnt about eighty loyalists.

The Northern division next attacked Arklow on the 9th of June. Esmond Kyan, a young gentleman of influence and undeniable worth, skilfully directed the three guns the insurgents had, disabling one of the enemy's pieces. But later, leading a charge of pikemen, he was shot in the shoulder.

The two Fathers Murphy, who were in command,

managed their men with great ability "and several times they had the advantage." The troops were intrenched "behind strong barricades and well-supported by artillery" (Grant).

Father Michael Murphy also personally led a column of pikemen repeatedly against the barricades, unsupported by the gunmen, who, to the number of 2,000, having exhausted their ammunition early in the fight, marched off the field. "The pikemen captured one of the royal cannon and despatched the gunners," but a cannon-shot struck and killed Father Michael, and on that his men lost heart and gave way. Nevertheless, it was a drawn battle. General Needham, the king's general, was only prevented from retreating by his second-in-command, Skerritt, and did not dare to leave his intrenchments and barricades. The peasantry needed only to have vigorously followed up their partial success, to have cleared the road to Dublin.

Had the gunmen and pikemen been intermingled in the proportions, say, of three or five pikemen to one gunman, a solid mass of 6,000 to 10,000 men could have been hurled in a charge against the barricades and would probably have carried them. As it was, the whole brunt of the fighting fell on the pikemen, who were exposed, as they charged over the open ground, to a ceaseless fire of the musketry and grapeshot, without being able to reply of course, and only covered by Kyan's three guns.

Father John Murphy at this fight was at the disadvantage of having only "the latest levies" of the rebel army—men who "were, for the most part, miserably armed. The bodies of sharpshooters seem to have

been at New Ross " (O'Connor Morris). Father Michael Murphy was within thirty yards of the enemy's line leading on his brigade to the charge, when struck by the cannon-shot. He was on horseback and bore a green flag " bearing the words ' Death or Liberty ' on a white cross."

Father John's column, " advancing by the sea road, captured all the enemy's advanced positions and drove the troops in confusion across the river into the town." Under Father John was a gallant youth of nineteen, Miles Byrne, who afterwards wrote a graphic account of this and other fights in Wexford. " Though the contest lasted from four o'clock until late in the evening, and was very determined on both sides, the losses were not great." Gordon, a loyalist, though fair-minded historian, only puts the rebel loss at 300, and this would further seem to show that the peasantry were not defeated and only desisted from attack, in grief at the loss of so respected a leader as Father Michael Murphy. Miles Byrne indeed claimed Arklow as a victory, and bitterly lamented that it should have been abandoned.

As usual, " the insurgents had shown conspicuous courage, and Castlereagh declared he could never have believed that untrained peasants would have fought so well."

As Thomas Davis, the Protestant national poet, wrote, " Great hearts ! how faithful ye were. How ye bristled up when the foe came on ; how ye set your teeth to die as his shells and round shot fell steadily ; and with how firm a cheer ye dashed at him, if he gave you any chance at all of a grapple ! From the

wild burst with which ye triumphed at Oulart Hill, down to the faint gasp wherewith the last of your last column died in the corn fields of Meath, there is nothing to shame your valour, your faith, or your patriotism. You wanted arms and you wanted leaders. Had you had them you would have guarded a green flag in Dublin Castle, a week after you beat Walpole. Isolated, unorganised, unofficered, half armed, girt by a swarm of foes, you ceased to fight, but you neither betrayed nor repented. Your sons need not fear to speak of Ninety-eight."

After the "drawn battle" of Arklow, it was decided by the Wexford leaders to do what they should have done at first, muster all their remaining forces on Vinegar Hill, at Enniscorthy, and hazard all in one big fight. But it was too late now to win by weight of numbers. General Lake was closing around them with 20,000 men, equal numbers with their own poor, half-armed, wholly undisciplined force. On the 21st of June, he advanced against their position on Vinegar Hill with 13,000 men, cavalry and infantry, besides a strong force of artillery. His strength would have been greater, but, for some unexplained reason, General Needham's column failed to turn up in its appointed place at the rear of the rebel camp.

Under Lake, who was known as "the People's Butcher," were Generals Dundas, Duff, Loftus, Johnson, and Eustace, in command of as many divisions. The Wexfordmen had 13 guns of small, almost toylike calibre, mostly ship's guns brought in by the patriotic captains of ships in Wexford harbour. The supply of ammunition was scanty. Nevertheless, from behind



some rude earthen intrenchments they had thrown up, the half-armed peasants made a gallant stand. "Their leaders encouraged them by words, their women by cries. They gave the enemy back defiant shouts, as they faced with despairing valour the storm of shot and shell that burst on the four sides of their position." (Luby). General Lake's horse was shot under him.

For an hour and a half the peasantry stood their ground, and only broke and fled when the enemy had mounted the hilltop. There fell Father Clinch, resisting to the last. He was shot while riding a large white horse and urging on his men with a huge sabre. Edward Hay, a rebel general, was captured, with others, and between 500 and 600 were killed.

By "Needham's gap," the routed peasants were enabled to retreat to Wexford through a country where they could not be pursued by cavalry or cannon, "so that they suffered no punishment worth speaking of in the pursuit." The pikemen could always give a good account of themselves against their foes at close quarters.

General Sir John Moore attacked the fugitives from Vinegar Hill, or, rather, was attacked by them, near Lacken Hill or Goff's Bridge. They thought to retrieve the day by seizing on New Ross "in the absence of the troops." Fighting "very steadily" for four hours, they "retired only when their ammunition was exhausted."

Seeing that all was lost now, they broke up into various small bodies, and tried to cut their respective ways through the ring of foes that girt them in. One under Father Kearns and Anthony Perry was defeated

and dispersed ; but Father John Murphy, who first raised the standard of revolt in Wexford, led his band through Carlow, defeated some militia at Goresbridge, and, entering Kilkenny, captured Castlecomer. Cornered at Kilcomney Hill, however, and forced to fight at disadvantage, they were defeated ; and Father John, surrendering, was cruelly scourged and executed, his body being publicly burned and his head spiked on the market house at Tullow by General Duff.

Father Philip Roche was also taken, brutally maltreated, and hanged ; but another small force, under Mr. Edward Fitzgerald of New Park, who must not be confused with Lord Edward, and the brothers Byrne of Ballymanus, broke through, like Father John, into Wicklow, and joined the Wicklow insurgents under " General " Joseph Holt and the even more renowned Michael Dwyer. With them was young Miles Byrne, who was a son of Mr. Garret Byrne of Ballymanus. He afterwards became an officer in the French army under Napoleon.

They attacked Hacketstown on June 25th, but were repulsed and pursued by a strong force. On the 29th, at Ballyellis, outside Carnew, they turned at bay and formed an ambushade. The Ancient Britons, a hated Welsh fencible cavalry regiment, were in hot pursuit, and, coming on round a turn in the road at full gallop, found the way stopped by a barricade of cars thrown across the road. A mass of pikemen sallied out from behind a wall and closed up the road behind, attacking them with headlong fury. Gunmen lined the wall and poured in a flank fire. The soldiers could not escape, for the other side of the road was skirted by a wide ditch

and swampy ground, in which their horses stuck. Every man of them was wiped out.

On the 4th of July, however, this body of Wexfordmen suffered defeat at Whiteheaps, and the formidable Wexford rising was over.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

HUMBERT'S INVASION.—THE FATE OF TONE.—HOLT  
AND DWYER.

Not altogether unaided did the Wexfordmen struggle. On the 8th of June, the Downshire men surprised and defeated the royalists with a loss of 60 men, but on the 12th were defeated by a large force of troops at Ballinahinch. Henry Munro was the leader of the insurgents here. And on the 7th June a gallant Presbyterian gentleman, named Henry Joy McCracken, with 9,000 men, attacked Antrim town and drove out the garrison, killing Lord O'Neill among others. A force sent by General Nugent to retake the town was at first unsuccessful, but at length, by bringing up artillery, compelled McCracken and his men to retreat. A few other slight actions took place, but here, as in the rest of Ireland, the outbreak was quickly crushed.

Lieutenant William Aylmer of the Kildare militia, nephew of Sir Fenton Aylmer, commanded the pikemen in an attempt at Ovidstown Hill. But instead of charging in a solid mass, as he called on them to do, his men wheeled behind a thin line of bushes and were simply mown down by the fire of the troops. He, however, contrived to escape and joined the Wexfordmen, who elected him General, and he and General



Fitzgerald of New Park, the victor of Ballyellis, after the defeat at Whiteheaps, kept a considerable band on foot in the mountains on the border of Wicklow and Kildare. The pair eventually negotiated with the humane General Dundas, to whom they surrendered, on the 12th of July, "on condition that all the other leaders who had adventured with them should be at liberty to retire whither they pleased out of the British dominions."

This treaty was afterwards shamefully broken in the case of the brave Esmond Kyan, who, on surrendering, was court-martialled and hanged; but Fitzgerald and Aylmer's lives were spared, and they were expatriated. It was urged at the heroic Kyan's trial that, as he had been the means of saving some loyalist prisoners from being massacred by the rabble in Wexford—not the fighting men—he evidently possessed considerable influence over the rebels, and that he should have used this influence to dissuade them from insurrection, instead of encouraging them in it. So his humanity cost him dear. The same argument was used against Bagenal Harvey; and consequently another rebel chief, with true Irish wit, exclaimed, "Thank heaven no one can accuse me of having saved any Protestant prisoners."

When all was over some weeks, three French frigates entered Killala Bay and landed some 1,260 French officers and men with three pieces of cannon, under a General Humbert. This was on August 22nd, 1798. Had they arrived before Vinegar Hill, the war might have been different.

Humbert seized Killala, and thousands of the peas-

antry promptly joined him. Leaving 200 men to hold the town, he marched on Castlebar, where General Lake had gathered an army of 6,000 men to oppose him. "He was expected to arrive by one road; he chose another," through Windy Gap, and the pass of Barnaghee, and, encountering the English army, routed it by one charge, before a blow could be struck.

Such was the panic of the royal troops and the headlong way in which cavalry and foot alike fled, that the rout is still known as "the Races of Castlebar." The terrified royal troops did not halt until they reached Tuam. The English lost 14 guns, 5 colours and 600 men in killed, wounded and prisoners.

Lord Cornwallis joined Lake, and the two once more tried to come to conclusions with Humbert. He repulsed them at Kilmaine, Ballinrobe, Tubbercurry, Collooney, Ballinamore and Drumshambo in succession, as he marched steadily on through Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim, *en route* for the capital.

At Ballinamuck in the county Longford, half way to Dublin, he was at last, on the 8th September, surrounded and turned to bay by a force ten times superior to his own. The royal troops were 30,000 strong. He fought for half an hour, captured Lord Roden and his dragoons in the early part of the fight, and then, overwhelmed by numbers, surrendered. "A great and useless slaughter," says Grant, "was made among the fugitives"—Humbert's Irish allies, to whom of course no mercy was shown.

Matthew Tone, known as "the silent," Wolfe Tone's brother, was among the prisoners, as also was another

Franco-Irish officer named Teeling They were both hanged.

But the English Government had not yet heard the end of the Rising. Wolfe Tone sailed on September 20th, with a fresh French expedition under General Hardi It consisted of nine vessels, having on board 3,000 men. Head winds separated the fleet, and, on October 10th, only four vessels entered Lough Swilly. An English fleet of nine ships, under Admiral Warren, appeared in view, and a desperate battle ensued. Tone, who wore the uniform of a French General, to which rank he had been advanced, was on the flagship, the *Hoche*. She was attacked by no less than four British men-of-war, but she resisted for six hours, Tone fighting as bravely as any and refusing to seek safety in a small boat when advised to do so. When she was only like a log on the water the *Hoche* struck her flag.

Tone had commanded one of the batteries and seemed "like a man seeking to rush upon death." He did not wish to survive defeat and failure yet again.

Taken to Letterkenny, at a dinner given to the French officers Tone was recognised by Sir George Hill—an old schoolfellow in Trinity College and an Orange magistrate—who had him arrested. He was tried by court-martial, and, of course, found guilty. He claimed a soldier's death as an officer in the French army, that he be shot, not hanged like a dog. But his foes refused to grant him such a death; and so he is supposed to have opened a vein in his neck with a knife. After lingering for some days in pain, he died

on the 19th of November, 1798. Many believed at the time that he was privately murdered in his prison.

His body lies in the churchyard of Bodinstown, Kildare. "Thus passed away," says Dr. Madden, "one of the master-spirits of his time." Thus perished one of the most formidable enemies England had ever had to deal with in Ireland. "England," wrote Daniel Crilly, "was rid of the most powerful and subtle opponent to her sway in Ireland since the days of Hugh O'Neill." "His fearless and unselfish devotion to his country's cause, for which he gave up all worldly pleasure, comfort and ambition, has made his name enshrined for all time in the hearts of his countrymen." (Ferguson).

"General" Joseph Holt, who was a Protestant farmer of substance before the outbreak, kept the flag of insurrection flying among the Wicklow Mountains until the 8th November. His corps of "Mountain Cavalry," which included in its ranks Hackett, as colonel, and the bold Michael Dwyer as captain, repeatedly routed troops sent against it, chased these back to Dublin. The Government offered £300 reward for Holt's capture, and increased it later. He surrendered on honourable terms, through Lord Powerscourt, and was exiled. Captain Michael Dwyer refused to come in and participate in the pardon, and, with a few daring spirits, easily swollen at any time to thirty or more men, continued the hopeless struggle for years. We shall hear of him again in 1803, when he was still holding out.

One of his most famous exploits was that on the 19th December, 1798. He was surprised in a cottage at



Bernamuck in the Glen of Imale, among the Wicklow Mountains, his snug retreat, having with him only three companions. The soldiers—Highlanders—had surrounded the cabin and called on him to surrender. He refused. It was the dead of night and the ground was deep in snow. Each of the four outlaws, for such they had been made, defended a side of the hut and kept the assailants at bay, killing several, until these succeeded in setting the roof on fire.

By that time two of the outlaws, Samuel McAlister and John Savage, were desperately wounded.

"Captain," said McAlister then, addressing Dwyer, "Savage and I are done for. We'll throw open the door and rush out. The soldiers will empty their pieces into us. Then you and Costello should be able to burst through."

Dwyer would not have it at first, but McAlister and Savage insisted, and they had their way. It was a deed of the sublimest heroism. Embracing each other, they flung open the door and

"Stood before the foemen, revealed amid the flame.

From out their levelled pieces the wished-for volley came."

Riddled with shot, the heroic McAlister and the equally heroic Savage sank across one another. Then out like furies, with clubbed muskets, burst Dwyer and Pat Costello. Dwyer got through, but his surviving companion was captured. Running like a deer, the daring outlaw chief disappeared into the snow and darkness, and easily eluded pursuit among his native fastnesses.

The Rebellion of '98 cost the insurgents 50,000

persons, many of whom were non-combatants and brutally slaughtered, the royalists lost 20,000.

James Napper Tandy, whose name is familiar to all Irishmen from his mention in the popular rebel ballad of '98, "The Wearing of the Green," had also gone to France, like Tone, with a view to urging the Directory to send aid to the insurgents. He received provisional rank as a general in the French army, and got together "a small body of Irish refugees, intending to form the nucleus of an army in Ireland. They sailed in the *Anacreon* and landed on the coast of Donegal, but embarked again and sailed northward," the expedition eventually coming to nothing. Tandy was arrested at Hamburg, but released. Arrested again, he was sentenced to death, but ultimately pardoned on condition that he left the country.

The pikes used by the insurgents, their principal, one might almost say, only weapon, were fifteen to eighteen feet long, the staffs being made of ash, and the spear-like heads having a small keen-bitted axe-head on one side with a sharpened hook on the other, as a rule, for the purpose of cutting the reins of cavalry. Sometimes the axe-head was omitted, but the hook was always attached. Strange to say, the Wexfordmen do not seem to have attempted to organise a cavalry corps—a decided mistake on their part, one would think.

"The uniform adopted by the rebel chiefs was green, faced with white or yellow, and laced with gold. They wore white vests, buckskin breeches, half boots ('Hessians') and cocked hats adorned with cock neck-feathers and green cockades." (Grant.)

A Grand National Committee of seven was appointed by them to form a general board of direction, and Bagenal Harvey was elected president; then there was a senate or Council of Elders, and a General Council or Board of Deputies consisting of 500 members, so that during its short-lived insurrection Wexford was practically a republic.

The generals of the United Army were all duly elected, and consisted of:—Generalissimo, Father Philip Roche; Generals Father John and Michael Murphy, Father Kearns and Father Clinch; Generals Bagenal Harvey, Edward Fitzgerald, Edward Roche, Esmond Kyan, Anthony Perry of Inch, Garret Byrne of Ballymanus, Thomas Cloney, Edward Hay, Patrick Sutton (Councillor Sutton of Wexford), John Rossiter, John Kelly of Killann, William Aylmer, Matthew Keogh, O'Hea, Doyle and Redmond. Nicholas Gray, who afterwards took part in a later rebellion, was secretary of the commander-in-chief and signed all official papers.

Of the gentlemen of property and superior education who formed members of the rebel senate or Council of Elders, the most prominent were John Henry Colclough of Ballyteague and his brother, Cornelius Grogan, Dr. M'Cullom, Mr. Brennan, who had held the post of High Sheriff of the County, and Mr. Lysaght.

In all there were 16 to 20 priests among the insurgents, but in no sense was it a Catholic rebellion. Many of the most trusted leaders of the peasantry, as we have shown, were Protestants, such as Bagenal Harvey, one of the two Colcloughs, Grogan, Perry, Keogh, McCracken, Munro, and Holt, to say nothing of Wolfe Tone, Lord Edward, etc.

“ They rose in dark and evil days  
    To right their native land ;  
They kindled here a living blaze  
    That nothing shall withstand.  
Alas, that might can vanquish right !  
    They fell and passed away,  
But true men, like you men,  
    Are plenty here to day.

Then, here's their memory—may it be  
    For us a guiding light,  
To cheer our strife for liberty,  
    And teach us to unite.  
Through good and ill be Ireland's still,  
    Though sad as their's your fate,  
And true men, be you men,  
    Like those of 'Ninety-Eight.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

## HOW THE "UNION WAS PASSED."

Ireland was crushed once more and lay prone beneath the heel of England yet again. Pitt, the British Prime Minister, no longer had cause to dread the moral force of the Volunteers or the physical force of an exasperated peasantry. The power of both had been broken by the awful insurrection of '98, so cruelly provoked and as cruelly put down. He determined to end the Parliament he had so unwillingly conceded to Ireland, the legislative freedom that "Grattan's Parliament" had won, and he now advanced his scheme for the Legislative Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

Resistance was out of the question by Ireland, reduced to such utter helplessness; and the great mass of the people, the Catholics, were deluded by Lord Cornwallis, the Viceroy or Lord Lieutenant, into thinking that "Catholic Emancipation" would be granted on the Act of Union passing into law.

On January 22nd of the year, 1799, following that dreadful one of so much blood and heroism, the suggestion of the Union was made by Cornwallis, but the proposal was defeated by the Irish House of Commons by a majority of five, in the debate on the Address, although the Irish House of Lords, as might be expected, approved it.

The country was jubilant, but, during the recess that followed, Lords Cornwallis, Clare and Castlereagh left no stone unturned, no vile method unused, to secure a majority for the Union in the next Session. Needless to say, the English Parliament had approved the proposal. All officials who had voted against the measure were dismissed, and peerages, pensions and places were liberally bestowed to win votes. Owners of "pocket" or "rotten boroughs" were bribed with big sums of money to put in men who would vote as was wanted, while all manner of false rumours of threatening French invasions and revolutionary plots were disseminated amongst the landed gentry, to scare them into supporting the only means of "safety for society and security for property, viz., a Union with Great Britain." All these means were openly employed by the Government to effect its end. There was no need for concealment or caution—the country was crushed and helpless. The secret service money was also largely used for the desired end, in bribes and corruption of all sorts.

Some of the Catholic and Protestant Bishops supported the Government measure; but the great mass of the people of all denominations was steadfastly opposed to the destruction of their independent nationality. The Catholics did not want emancipation at the expense of that.

Parliament reassembled in 1800, and Lord Castlereagh, who was Chief Secretary, brought forward the Union Bill. Sir Lawrence Parsons, in a powerful oration, proposed an amendment "that it was desirable to maintain the independence of the Irish Parliament

as settled in 1782." Ponsonby, Bushe and Plunket also spoke on the patriot side, as also a Mr. Egan. The last-mentioned was addressing the House when a whisper ran through it.

"Grattan! Grattan is here!"

The great Patriot leader had been an invalid and out of the country, trying to recruit his health, broken by his heroic devotion to his country in Parliament.

A tremendous shout arose without on College Green. It was taken up in the lobbies. The doors of the Chamber of the Commons was thrown open and "the inspired countenance of Henry Grattan" was revealed. Emaciated, but with preternaturally kindling eye, he tottered feebly forward, supported by Ponsonby and Moore.

The whole House rose respectfully, cheer following upon cheer. Lord Castlereagh bowed formally. Grattan had been returned for the close borough of Wicklow, which belonged to a Mr. Tighe. Egan willingly gave way to the great orator, who, unable to stand, asked permission to speak sitting; and then he was heard "to thunder again those iron words that thrill'd like the clash of spears." He spoke for two hours "with unprecedented fire and splendour."

But all in vain his eloquence, his forcible argument that "it was not in the power of the Parliament to put an end to its own existence." In vain his glowing words, his efforts to awaken some spark of patriot fire in the corrupt hearts of his hearers. The division that followed, after eighteen hours' debate, resulted in a majority of 42 for the Government.

Pitt, the English Premier, had wanted a majority

of not less than 50. Desperately, "inch by inch," Grattan and the Patriots fought the measure in its progress through the House—the Speaker, Mr. Foster, being one of its most vehement opponents from first to last.

When in the final division in the Commons, 153 voted for it and 88 against, Foster's "lips seemed to decline their office. At length, with an eye averted from the object which he hated, he proclaimed, with a subdued voice, 'the ayes have it.' For an instant he stood statue-like, then indignantly and in disgust, flung the bill upon the table and sank into his chair with an exhausted spirit." (Barrington.)

The Bill received the royal assent on August 2nd, 1800, and the two Parliaments of Great Britain and Ireland were declared to be henceforth one. Ireland was no longer a nation; she had sold her birthright, or rather it had been sold over her head by her corrupt Ascendancy representatives!

Batteries of artillery were kept in readiness to sweep the streets around the old Parliament House on the day the Bill passed, in case of a popular outbreak.

The Act of Union came into operation on the 1st January, 1801. As to its chief articles, they will be found in any history, no matter how small, and so need not be recapitulated here. A sordid business from first to last, the selling of a nation's birthright, the Act's only claim to inclusion here in a romance of Irish history is its patriotic resistance by such as Grattan and Foster.

Grattan became a member of the United, or English, House of Commons in 1805, and a persistent advocate there of Catholic rights. He lived till 1820.



The Rev. Dr. Dalton, in his "History of Ireland," thus compares Grattan and Flood: "Both were men of the highest ability . . . . Flood was cold, measured, calculating; Grattan impetuous and energetic . . . . In voice and manner and gesture Flood had the advantage, for Grattan's voice was thin and his gestures ungraceful, but amid the force and fire of his delivery, the wealth and splendour of his imagery, the beauty of his diction, these defects were forgotten; and if Flood was a strong river advancing with measured flow, Grattan was a mountain torrent . . . . carrying in its rushing course everything in its path. In the moral qualities all the advantages were on Grattan's side. Flood was jealous and vain, Grattan was neither; Flood deserted the popular cause for office, Grattan was incorruptible; he loved Ireland with an undivided heart, and to serve her was his highest ambition. The ascendancy of his talents and character was quickly recognised, and he soon occupied the place which Flood had filled."

Grattan had a handsome and singularly sweet, winning countenance, though rather elongated, unlike the broad, heavy, massive face we usually associate with the orator and as exemplified by O'Connell, Gladstone, John Bright, and others. Flood's nose spoiled his face, curving inward and then outward, to a sharp aggressive point.

The pair are generally represented in Volunteer uniform; and, in the well-known picture of the Irish House of Commons before the Union, are shown standing together in the foreground, on the right hand side, Flood whispering something of evident moment, with

forefinger raised to emphasise what he is saying, in the ear of Grattan, who is listening attentively and as evidently weighing his words.

In the same famous picture, John Philpot Curran, the eloquent and celebrated advocate of the United Irishmen, a trim-built, rugged-faced little Irishman, is addressing the House, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, the patriotic Geraldine who figured so prominently in the rebellion of 1798, is easily discernible on the left hand side by reason of the fact that he preferred his own head of hair to the powdered wigs of those about him.

It was an age of duelling, and Grattan, Leader of the House of Commons as he was, "was ever ready to sustain with his pistols the force of his arguments." He fought a duel with Lord Earlsfort, and another with Isaac Corry, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Corry had made "a coarse and virulent attack on him, calling him an 'unimpeached traitor.'" Grattan thereupon "overwhelmed Corry in a torrent of invective scarcely ever equalled in any Parliament." It was during the debate on the Union. Corry particularly resented being called "a dancing master" by Grattan, and he challenged Grattan. Grattan "went from the House to fight him and shot him through the arm," and "in consequence became more powerful and more popular than ever."

So universal was duelling and so preposterous the ideas entertained of it, that "no gentleman was considered to have taken his proper station in life till he had 'smelt powder,' as it was called; no barrister could go on circuit till he had obtained a reputation in this

way . . . . . and many men of the bar, practising half a century ago, owed their eminence not to powers of eloquence or to legal ability, but to a daring spirit and the number of duels they had fought."

The same author quoted above relates that when Dr. Hodgkinson, Vice-Provost of Trinity College, then a very old man, was consulted as to the best course of study to pursue for the bar, whether the student should begin with Fearné or Chitty, he replied :

"My young friend, practise four hours a day at Rigby's pistol gallery and it will advance you to the woosack faster than all the Fearnés and Chittys in the library."

Sir Jonah Barrington gives a catalogue of barristers who killed their man and of judges who actually fought their way to the bench.

Naturally this state of things bred a very lawless state of society, and in Grattan's day the idle young gentlemen about town, known as "Bucks," associated themselves into various clubs, where they comported themselves in the most outrageous manner. Many of them, calling themselves "Pinkindindies," went about with a small portion cut off the scabbards of their swords—everyone with any pretension to gentility then wore a sword—so that they could prick or "pink," with the naked points, anyone with whom they quarrelled.

These Bucks were for the most part only cowardly bullies, and merely behaved thus as a rule when they had the courage of numbers. "Tiger" Roche, perhaps the most famous of these swaggering roysterers, was, however, a queer compound of courage and cowardice,



displaying either quality at different times. Another noted bully was "Fighting Fitzgerald." "Tiger" Roche once, singlehanded, went to the aid of an old gentleman, his son and daughter who were assailed by a party of "Pinkindindies," and set about the cowardly gang so vigorously that he wounded some and put the rest to ignominious flight.

"How did they pass the Union?  
By perjury and fraud;  
By slaves who sold their land for gold  
As Judas sold his God. . . .

How thrive we by the Union?  
Look round your native land;  
In ruined trade and wealth decayed  
See slavery's surest brand."



## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## ROBERT EMMET.

Ireland was generally supposed to be still crushed, but in 1803, a fresh insurrection startled everybody and showed that, phoenix-like, patriotism could arise from out the ashes of its dead self.

Robert Emmet, a younger brother of Thomas Addis Emmet, one of the leaders of the United Irishmen, still cherished hopes of a successful rebellion against England. He was only 25, and full of ardour and enthusiasm and a deep, abiding love of his country. To-day he stands out high above all others as Ireland's dearest patriot son, the idolised patriot-martyr of the great mass of the people. Wolfe Tone, Lord Edward, Owen Roe O'Neill, Sarsfield—all these, bright and illustrious names on Ireland's roll of fame as they are, give second place in the heart of the Irish people to Robert Emmet.

He was a Protestant and the son of a distinguished Dublin physician, and he had been expelled from Trinity College because of his revolutionary ideas. His portraits show a small, compact head, with a thin, thoughtful, yet sternly resolute face, indicating a highly cultured and refined nature; close-cut black hair, falling in slightly curling, carelessly parted manner

over a broad, high, rounding brow ; the nose, a decidedly aggressive Roman, that of the born soldier ; the lips tight-shut, yet full of eloquence ; the eyes large, brilliant, defiant ; the chin firm and well-set. In stature he was about five feet eight, and though slight in person, he was most active and capable of enduring great fatigue.

It is believed that in '98, being then only 20, he acted as confidential agent for the United Irishmen abroad. He interviewed Napoleon and Talleyrand in Paris, and, unlike Wolfe Tone, "was impressed with the future Emperor's insincerity" as regarded Ireland and its invasion. Seeing England embroiled in the great war with France, he now, in 1802, determined to attempt another rebellion. He conferred with Lord Cloncurry, the patriotic nobleman who, as related, is supposed to have been the mysterious and unknown fifth member of the United Irish Directory. Cloncurry does not appear, however, to have engaged in this wild scheme, for such it was undoubtedly.

Along with Miles Byrne, James Hope, Thomas Russell, who had been a lieutenant in the 64th Regiment of Foot and a prominent United Irishman, Nicholas Gray (Bagenal Harvey's secretary) and others including Michael Dwyer, the famous Wicklow insurgent chief, still in rebellion at that period, he formed a plan for the sudden seizure of Dublin castle and the ministers of the Crown there, and thus inaugurating a general insurrection. Michael Dwyer, who visited Emmet in disguise in Dublin, along with his two lieutenants, Martin Burke and Hugh Byrne, was opposed to the scheme as impracticable, but was nevertheless quite

willing to take part in it, and help it forward in every way.

Emmet formed dépôts of arms in various streets in Dublin, the principal one being in Marshalsea Lane, off Thomas Street. Here arms and ammunition were manufactured, forty men being constantly employed. Uniforms were also being made by tailors in the secret at these dépôts. Over 10,000 pikes and many muskets, pistols and blunderbusses were afterwards found in them. Emmet himself invented a hand grenade, or infernal machine, to explode in the face of advancing troops. July 23rd, 1803, was fixed for the rising, but, on the 18th July, an explosion at one of the dépôts in Patrick Street brought the authorities down on the conspirators. Some arms were found, but the majority were secreted in time.

On the day fixed for the rising, treachery and pusillanimity ruined everything. Michael Dwyer and the Wicklow men waited in vain for the messenger that was to be sent them. The Kildare men were turned back by a traitor, who told them the rising had been postponed. Miles Byrne and 300 Wexfordmen also received no word and so remained inactive, expecting it every minute.

Emmet himself was deceived. To the last he thought he had large bodies of men at his disposal. With a miserable following of 80 men, he sallied out at eight in the evening, dressed in his uniform of green and gold, from the dépôt in Marshalsea Lane. Some of the men were drunk, and nearly all insubordinate. A man rushed up crying that the soldiers were coming.

Emmet pushed on with those immediately about him, but the stragglers began to pillage shops, attacked

a Mr. Leech of the custom-house, and piked him. Then the coach of Lord Kilwarden, the Chief Justice, a most humane man, came up, and the mad, unruly mob stopped the coach, and one Shannon ran his pike through the unfortunate judge. His nephew who was with him was also killed, but his daughter was left unmolested. Emmet himself came rushing back, filled with horror and disgust at such bloodshed, and saw her in safety into a neighbouring house. It is supposed that Kilwarden was mistaken by the insurgents for Lord Carleton, who had sentenced the Brothers Sheares. In any case the deed was a diabolical and wanton crime.

Emmet had now lost all control over the savage mob. A detachment of troops appeared at the corner of Cut-purse Row, and fired on it, when it scattered at once. Small parties carried on a few skirmishes, attacking the guardhouse on the Coombe, and killing Colonel Brown and two members of the Liberty Rangers. But they, too, were dispersed, and Robert Emmet was a ruined, outlawed, conscience-stricken and broken-hearted man.

He could easily have got out of the country though, for he succeeded in reaching Dwyer's secret retreat in the Wicklow mountains, but he loved Sarah Curran, the youngest daughter of the illustrious advocate, John Philpot Curran. Curran did not approve of the match, and the lovers had plighted their troth in secret. Emmet returned to his old lodgings at Harold's Cross, a suicidal act, in order to have a last interview with his betrothed, as she passed on her way to her father's country house, the Priory, near Dundrum.

There he was arrested on August 25th by Major Sirr



the well-known town major, and he was subsequently identified by Dr. Elrington, a Provost of Trinity College.

On September 19th, he was tried for high treason. He refused to make any defence. Curran, incensed at his daughter's name being mentioned in connection with him, had declined to act as his counsel. The trial lasted only one day before Lord Norbury, and at midnight a verdict of guilty was returned against him. Before sentence was passed upon him he made the famous and eloquent speech in which he requested "the charity of the world's silence, and that his tomb remain uninscribed and his memory in oblivion until other times and other men could do justice to his character."

"When my country takes her place among the nations of the earth, then and not till then, let my epitaph be written," he said in conclusion.

At noon the following day, September 20th, 1803, he was led to execution, the gibbet being erected in Thomas Street, at the head of Bridgefoot Street, and directly opposite the Protestant Church of St. Catherine.

"A carriage, containing Miss Curran and a friend, was drawn up on the roadside, near Kilmainham, and, evidently by preconcert, as the vehicle containing Emmet passed on its way to the place of execution, the unhappy pair exchanged their last greeting on earth." Sarah Curran was closely veiled, but the eyes of love were sharp. Robert Emmet put his head out of the window of the carriage in which he was and gazed intently, waving his hand several times till out of sight. "At the moment Emmet passed the lady removed her veil,



Robert Emmett on his way to execution





stood up in the carriage, waved her handkerchief, and sank back on the seat," apparently swooning.

It was believed up to the last that Thomas Russell, who was in town for that purpose, would attempt a rescue with the co-operation of Michael Dwyer and his mountain band. But nothing of the kind took place. It would have been useless, for the Government had taken every precaution to guard against any such attempt, strong bodies of cavalry and infantry guarding every approach and surrounding the scaffold. With a serene countenance and air, Emmet suffered death, and his head was then severed from his body and held up to view as that of a traitor.

Thomas Moore has "embalmed for all time the sad story of Emmet and the ill-starred lady of his love, who ere many years passed over followed him to the grave" (Luby). Moore was his fellow-student and companion, and wrote round him the two famous songs, "Oh! breathe not his name," and "She is far from the land where her young hero sleeps." This last refers to Sarah Curran, who, though she was eventually prevailed on to marry another—a worthy, noble gentleman who loved her tenderly—never forgot him, and died really of a broken heart, soon after, on the shores of the Adriatic.

What pathos there must have been, what anguish in that last memorable interview of theirs, their meeting as he was on his way to execution! What a scene for a drama!

"When he who adores thee," another of Moore's melodies, is supposed to be Emmet's dying address to his country; and the poet relates how once, when he



was playing the air of "Let Erin remember the days of old," in the company of Emmet, the young patriot-martyr exclaimed :

"Oh, that I were marching at the head of a thousand men to that tune ! "

"On the whitewashed walls of every Irish peasant's home, beside the pictures of the Pope and of O'Connell, there is another that is familiar to us all," writes Dr. D'Alton, "It is that of Emmet in his white trousers and vest, his Hessian boots, his coat of green and gold, his military cloak, his cocked hat in his hand, his face spiritualised by enthusiasm, his eyes filled with the light that has never shone upon land or sea. Wherever the Irish race has gone it is the same, and abroad or at home the name of Emmet is one with which to conjure." Another familiar picture of him is with his arms folded, facing his judges at his trial, dressed in civilian attire.

Sarah Curran was not exactly handsome, nor was she tall. She was very slight with dark complexion, and eyes large and black. "Her look was the mildest, sweetest and softest ever seen." The gentleman she eventually married was Major Sturgeon, whom she met while on a visit to a Quaker family in Cork named Penrose.

Thomas Russell, Emmet's friend, had been captured before the execution, and he in his turn suffered death. He lies buried in the Protestant churchyard of Downpatrick. Miles Byrne escaped to France and rose to eminence in the French army, becoming a chef de bataillon under Napoleon.

Michael Dwyer held out in the Wicklow mountains some time longer, when, influenced by the arguments

of Mr. Hume of Humewood, he surrendered on honourable conditions, and was expatriated to Australia. He died in 1814 in Sydney, New South Wales, and was buried there.

“General” Holt, his old brother-in-arms, had also been transported to New South Wales, but received a pardon in 1809 and returned to Ireland, dying in 1826 at Kingstown.



## PART IX.

### MORAL, OR PHYSICAL, FORCE.

“ Chisel the likeness of the Chief  
Not in gaiety, nor grief ;  
Change not by your art to stone  
Ireland’s laugh or Ireland’s moan . . .  
But would you by your art unroll  
His own and Ireland’s secret soul  
And give to others time to scan  
The greatest greatness of the man ?  
Fierce defiance let him be  
Hurling at our enemy—  
From a base as fair and sure  
As our love is true and pure. . . .  
On his broad brow let there be  
A type of Ireland’s history ;  
Pious, generous, deep and warm,  
Strong and changeful as a storm . . .  
Knit his look to purpose stern. . . .  
And the hope that leads him on . . .  
Thus he spoke and thus he stood,  
Proffering in our cause his blood. . .  
Chisel thus, and thus alone,  
If to the man you’d change the stone.”

“ O’Connell’s Statue,” by THOMAS DAVIS.





## CHAPTER XXIX.

## DANIEL O'CONNELL, THE LIBERATOR.

The Irish Catholics, who had hoped that the Union would be accompanied, or shortly followed, by the removal of the disabilities under which they laboured, very quickly found out that that hope was but a delusion and a snare. A vigorous agitation for Catholic Emancipation was now started and brought to the front a man whose name soon became a power in the land, a man who was destined to win by his wonderful forensic eloquence those rights so long denied him and his fellow-religionists.

This was the renowned Daniel O'Connell, rightfully called "the Liberator." He was born 1775, near Cahirciveen in Kerry. Adopting the legal profession, he was called to the Bar in the year of horror and heroism, 1798. In 1800 he spoke at a meeting against the Union, and after it he became the leader of the Catholics of Ireland, being elected, in 1810, the chairman of their committee. With his legal knowledge and great shrewdness, he was able to evade the law of several new Acts, which were made to suppress the various associations that he formed, and so fearlessly continued his agitation.

At one of the Catholic meetings that took place in

January, 1815, O'Connell referred to the corporation of Dublin as "beggarly." To this reference a Mr. D'Esterre took exception and challenged O'Connell to a duel with pistols. O'Connell—though many of his friends believed the whole affair was simply a plot of his enemies to try and get rid of him—accepted the challenge, and had for his second a noted duellist, Major MacNamara, known as "Fireball" MacNamara, on account of his duelling propensities.

D'Esterre and O'Connell met at Bishop's Court outside Dublin, and O'Connell mortally wounded his antagonist with his first shot, D'Esterre missing him. O'Connell, however, deeply regretted having caused the unfortunate man's death. In the same year he was challenged to fight another duel by Secretary Peel, but they never met, O'Connell being arrested in London on his way to the Continent where the duel was to take place.

So high ran sectarian feeling in England that he made very little progress until 1821, when a Catholic Relief Bill rewarded his efforts and passed the Commons, to be thrown out by the Lords. O'Connell, two years later (1823) founded the Catholic Association, members subscribing a pound a year and associates one shilling. Then penny monthly subscriptions were adopted. These subscriptions were called the "Catholic Rent," and soon averaged £500 a week. Government, alarmed, promptly suppressed the Association by Act of Parliament, whereupon O'Connell re-started it under another name, that of "The New Catholic Association," when, ashamed of themselves possibly, the authorities did not again interfere.

In the general election of 1826, the Protestant members for Waterford, Louth and Monaghan, were pledged to support the Catholic cause; and in 1828, a vacancy occurring in the representation of Clare through Vesey Fitzgerald accepting office in the Duke of Wellington's ministry, and having to seek re-election, O'Connell resolved to stand against him.

O'Connell obtained 2,057 votes and Fitzgerald, 1,075. It was argued that, as a Catholic, O'Connell could not sit in Parliament. The law, however, as he knew, did not directly prevent him doing so, but it required him to take an oath denying certain doctrines of his faith which no Catholic could take.

After the election, O'Connell's journey back to Dublin was a regular triumphal march. The Government were terror-stricken, but the Duke of Wellington, himself an Irishman and the British Prime Minister, said Catholic Emancipation must become law or there would be civil war in Ireland again. "I advocate the measure," he said, "first and foremost to prevent another rebellion like '98, and, secondly, out of gratitude to those Irish soldiers who helped so much to win Waterloo."

Sir Robert Peel, therefore, brought in the Catholic Relief Act in 1829, making Catholics eligible for all offices, civil and military, excepting the Regency, the Lord Lieutenantcy of Ireland and the Lord Chancellorship of England, and framing a new form of oath for Catholics elected to any office to take, omitting what was objectionable. At the same time, though, an Act was passed disfranchising all 40s. holders—by whose help chiefly O'Connell had been elected—and substituting a £10 freehold as qualification for a vote, a most dastardly



piece of business, at which all decent-minded Englishmen were heartily disgusted. The number of votes by this electioneering dodge were reduced instantaneously from 200,000 to 26,000. It seems incredible that any men could have been found even in the most hollow-hearted and bigoted national assembly to pass such an unjust and cowardly Bill.

O'Connell now claimed his seat in the House of Commons. As he had been elected before the passing of the Emancipation Act, he was called on to take the old obnoxious Oath of Supremacy. This declared certain Catholic doctrines to be "impious and idolatrous."

"I decline, Mr. Clerk," he thereupon replied, "to take this oath. Part of it I know to be false; another part of it I do not believe to be true."

As he persisted in his refusal, the Speaker eventually ordered him to retire. O'Connell looked round the House, bowed, but still stood opposite to the Speaker, without making any further observation. The Speaker hereupon called on him a second time to withdraw, and then O'Connell, bowing, did so in silence.

Later Sir Robert Peel moved that O'Connell be heard at the Bar of the House. This was agreed to, and the "Liberator" there advanced his claim in a long and powerfully argumentative speech. But his claim was rejected. He appeared three times at the Bar, each time refusing to take the old oath.

On this a writ for a fresh election was issued. O'Connell again stood and was re-elected, when the new oath, with all the old objectionable features deleted, was presented to him. He readily took this oath, and so was allowed to sit. He was the first Catholic to do so

since the Penal days, and a new era had dawned for Great Britain and Ireland.

In 1820, a new and formidable secret society came into existence. This was *Ribbonism* or the *Ribbonmen*. It was purely a Catholic peasant organisation, and was at first directed against unjust landlords. A great many agrarian murders are attributed to the more violent members between 1858 and 1879. Later it was directed against the Orangemen, and faction fights frequently occurred. It extended in the 'fifties to Irishmen settled in England and became amongst them a sort of secret trade unionism, no man being allowed to work with them unless he joined them. In the time of the Fenians, 1865-7, the Ribbonmen refused for the most part to be drawn into that organisation, because the latter embraced Protestants as well as Catholics. In June, 1871, Ribbonism was suppressed by law. From the first the Catholic clergy waged a determined war upon it, denouncing it from the altar, yet it remained from first to last exclusively Catholic. It had secret signs, handgrips, and passwords, and produced a remarkable character named Richard Jones, who was convicted in 1840. He was its grand secretary, and apparently did his best to turn the organisation into a political conspiracy against the Government. But his efforts were not successful. Ribbonism remained to the end merely an agrarian or labour combination.

A dreadful "Tithe War" was meanwhile raging over the country, and conflicts resulting in loss of life frequently took place between the peasantry and the military and police. The tithes were a tax levied on all farmers, Catholic as well as Protestant, for the support

of the Protestant clergy, and these levies were collected in particularly odious ways. Coercion Acts proving useless, measures were at last taken to satisfy the Catholics, the number of Protestant bishops being reduced from eighteen to ten, and the church rate abolished. This was a tax for the maintenance or repair of Protestant churches. In 1838, the "Tithe Bill" reduced the tithes by a fourth and laid them on the landlord instead of the tenant, with the result that "the landlord added the tithes to the rent." (Murphy).

In this same year, 1838, the great Father Theobald Mathew, a Capuchin friar of Cork, accomplished a tremendous amount of good by advocating teetotalism. In less than a year he induced 150,000 persons to take the pledge to abstain from all intoxicating liquors. He had already won great esteem by his heroism in a cholera epidemic, six years before. He is known as the "apostle of temperance" and he worked "a revolution the like of which history does not record," with the result that crime decreased rapidly.

Having won Catholic Emancipation, the great Liberator now turned to the Union itself. He demanded the Repeal of the Act of Union as essential for the prosperity of Ireland, and started a Repeal Organisation, holding meetings everywhere. Vast numbers attended these, and many of the Repealers, with the idea of adopting the same course as the Volunteers of 1782, came "in something like military array," so that the Government again became alarmed. At a meeting at Tara, the old palace of the Milesian dynasty, 50,000 people were present.

O'Connell appointed another monster meeting at Clontarf on Sunday, October 8th, 1843. The Lord Lieutenant prohibited it as "calculated to excite reasonable and well-grounded apprehension," and large bodies of troops were drafted into Dublin and warships stationed in the harbours all round the coast. O'Connell, to the chagrin and bitter disappointment of many of his most ardent supporters, said the law must be obeyed, and so the meeting was not held. Nevertheless, O'Connell and others were prosecuted on the score of conspiracy, and the *Liberator* was found guilty, by a packed jury, and sentenced to a year's imprisonment and a fine of £2,000.

The great Dan appealed to the House of Lords, and had the verdict quashed, Lord Denman declaring it to be "a delusion, a mockery, and a snare." O'Connell had served three months' imprisonment, however, and his health was undermined by it, as well as disappointment at the failure of the Repeal Movement. It but wanted the horrible famine that fell on the land, the awful potato-blight of 1845, to bring about the end. Heartbroken he died at Genoa on his way to Rome, on May 15th, 1847. He was given a national funeral "nobly befitting his title of the Uncrowned Monarch" of Ireland.

The horrible famine to which we have referred lasted from 1845 to 1847, through the failure everywhere of the potato crops, and people died in thousands from fever, dysentery and sheer starvation. The population of our country was reduced in those three terrible, never-to-be-forgotten years by two and a half millions of people! Let us hasten to leave such a heartrending



subject, with the remark that it is a lasting disgrace to the English administration of the time.

“O’Connell was a thorough Celt,” wrote the late Justin McCarthy, M.P., in his “History of our own times.” “He represented all the impulsiveness, the quick-changing emotions, the passionate, exaggerated loves and hatreds . . . the ebullient humour—all the other qualities that are especially characteristic of the Celt. . . . He had a herculean frame, a stately presence, a face capable of expressing easily and effectively the most rapid alternations of mood, and a voice which all hearers admit to have been almost unrivalled for strength and sweetness. Its power, its pathos, its passion, its music have been described in words of positive rapture by men who detested O’Connell. He spoke without studied preparation. . . . He always spoke right to the hearts of his hearers. . . . He entered the House of Commons when he was nearly 54 years of age. . . . Mr. Roebuck has said that he considers O’Connell the greatest orator he ever heard in the House of Commons. Charles Dickens, when a reporter in the gallery. . . . put down his pencil once when engaged in reporting a speech of O’Connell on one of the tithe riots in Ireland, and declared that he could not take notes of the speech, so moved was he by its pathos.”

Lady Wilde thus wrote of him : “From the moment of his entrance into public life he became the soul of the Catholic party. He was then 25, with a fine, tall, manly, athletic figure, and a noble, commanding air, with considerable dignity about the carriage and movements of the head and shoulders. Amongst ten thou-

sand a stranger's eye would at once have fixed on him as the true king. Even to the last he retained his majesty of bearing ; an intelligent, expressive face. . . . The most striking characteristic of the countenance was the excessive beauty and whiteness of his forehead. It was delicately formed, too, rather broad than high, with no demagogical lowering preponderance over the eyebrows. . . . Each individual Catholic felt that he was elevated by his leader's courage, and ennobled by the lofty independence of this man who knew no fear."

O'Connor Morris says, "His gifts were of the highest order . . . and Catholic Ireland owes an incalculable debt to him . . . . His ideal was the restoration of the old Irish Parliament, an ideal that may have appeared attainable to a spectator of the events of 1782."

" And shall it last, this Union,  
To grind and waste us so ?  
O'er hill and lea, from sea to sea,  
All Ireland thunders, No !  
Eight million necks are stiff to bow—  
We know our might as men—  
We conquered once before, and now  
We'll conquer once again ;  
And rend this cursed Union  
And fling it to the wind—  
And Ireland's laws in Ireland's cause  
Alone our hearts shall bind."

JOHN O'HAGAN.

## CHAPTER XXX.

## THE YOUNG IRELANDERS.

Some of the ablest members of the Repeal Association had broken away from O'Connell, considering his constitutional policy of moral force to be useless, and advocating instead physical force again—open rebellion.

These seceders from "the constitutional party" were called "Young Irelanders," and the chief amongst them were John Mitchel, who practically started this new revolutionary movement; Thomas Davis, the poet; and William Smith O'Brien, who were all three Protestants. They established the "Nation" and "United Irishman" newspapers, which ultimately openly incited their readers to insurrection. Mitchel was arrested, in 1848, for seditious writings and speeches, along with Thomas Francis Meagher, who is known as "Meagher of the Sword" because of a stirring speech he once made in Conciliation Hall, praising the sword or an appeal to it as an arbiter in the disputes of nations.

The "Young Ireland" movement was not only revolutionary, it was a great Irish intellectual awakening, and gave a tremendous fillip to Irish literature and poetry. Thomas Osborne Davis, the poet,

was the real leader, but he never advocated insurrection, and had he lived this might not have happened. His fame as a national poet rivals that of his predecessor, Thomas Moore. He was born in Mallow, in 1814, and died at the early age of 31, leaving, however, an imperishable name on Ireland's roll of brilliant men. His poems "Fontenoy" and "The Surprise of Cremona" will endure while his countrymen remember those victories of the "Wild Geese," which must be for all time. As well a poet, he was "a philosopher, an historian, a man who had read much and thought much, tolerant, kindly, forbearing, with broad, human sympathies and a passionate love for Ireland."

A scene that took place a few months before his death between him and O'Connell instances his keenly sensitive, lovable nature and affection for his country and her great leader O'Connell as her "Liberator."

At a crowded meeting in Conciliation Hall, O'Connell turned fiercely on him.

"There is no such party," the Liberator exclaimed, "as that styled Young Irelanders. It is time that this delusion should be put an end to. Young Ireland may play what pranks they please. I do not envy them the name they rejoice in. I shall stand by *Old* Ireland, and I have some slight notion that Old Ireland will stand by me."

O'Connell could be very truculent in his speeches, but his truculence was never so misdirected as it was on that memorable occasion, never so uncalled for as when levelled at its then recipient.

Davis, who felt unbounded admiration for O'Connell, as we have said, "was deeply hurt, and, in replying,



burst into tears." And never tears so well became a man. They were no shame but every credit to his manhood and noble, deep-feeling temperament—they uncovered the great, sensitive, pulsing heart of the man to the keen, swiftly discerning eyes of the old chief, who was in his turn profoundly touched. Rising to his feet, he seized and wrung Davis's hand, pouring out protestations of regret; "there were mutual explanations and expressions of affection and goodwill; and with the public reconciliation of Davis and O'Connell an end was put to this painful scene."

Yet for all its pain to the actors, we would not have had it not happen, for it shows us, better than anything, the truly great natures of the two men.

Davis died, as we have said, in the flower of his youth, of scarlet fever, and his loss was keenly felt by his party, the members of which more than once exclaimed: "If only Davis were with us now."

His portrait shows us a square, heavy face, with a broad, noble brow, large, inexpressibly soft, soulful eyes, a sharp aquiline nose—the nose of a practical, as well as poetic, nature, and something of the fighter withal—a sweet, speaking mouth. The eyebrows are well-defined, and slightly arched, the hair long, and luxuriant and wavy, parted at one side, and joining a slight whisker that fringes the jaw and chin.

Among others of the bright galaxy of talent that the Young Ireland movement produced should be mentioned Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, Thomas D'Arcy Magee, Michael Doheny, James Clarence Mangan, D'Alton Williams, Lady Wilde ("Speranza"), and Mr. and Mrs. Kevin Izod O'Doherty. Mrs. O'Doherty

wrote under the *nom-de-plume* of "Eva" of the "Nation," the organ started by the Young Ireland party.

It was Thackeray in his "Book of Snobs," who first called Meagher "Meagher of the Sword," and Irishmen proudly took up the name and gave it to him.

A most dramatic scene took place at John Mitchel's trial at Green Street on the 22nd May, before Baron Lefroy.

"The Roman who saw his hand burning to ashes before the tyrant, promised that 300 should follow his example. Can I not promise for one, for two, for three, aye for hundreds?" he cried in the dock, looking proudly towards his friends in court.

There was immediately a shout from all sides of it: "For me! For me! Promise for me, Mitchel!" "And for me!" Many reached over and grasped his hand, and the judge hurriedly ordered the prisoner to be removed. Mitchel was sentenced to 14 years' transportation, and the *Habeas Corpus* Act was suspended and warrants were made out for the arrest of others.

On that William Smith O'Brien raised an insurrection in Tipperary, and at the head of a couple of hundred men, who responded to his call, attacked a police barracks at Ballingarry. The house was strong, the police were well armed, and the rebels were soon dispersed. A youth named James Stephens who was shot in the leg by the police will be heard of later.

William Smith O'Brien, the leader on this occasion, was the second son of Sir Edward O'Brien of County Clare, and on the death of his kinsman, the last Marquis of Thomond, his eldest brother became Baron Inchiquin.

He was educated at Harrow and Cambridge, and his alliance with the patriot party caused a sensation in aristocratic circles. £500 was offered for his apprehension the day before the affair at Ballingarry. Of the men around him in that engagement, if it can be dignified by the name of such, "not more than 20 possessed firearms, about twice that number were armed with pikes and pitchforks, the remainder had but their naked hands and the stones they could gather by the wayside." Opposed to them were 47 disciplined men splendidly armed.

For nearly two hours the firing continued. A desperate spirit, Terence Bellew McManus, "rolled a cart-load of hay up to the kitchen door of the barracks with the intention of setting fire to it and burning down the house. But O'Brien would not permit it . . . and the first and last battle of the insurrection was lost and won." A strong force of Constabulary from Cashel was approaching, and the rebels broke up.

O'Brien was not captured until August 5th. He was tried for high treason at Clonmel and found guilty, when he was sentenced to death, a sentence afterwards commuted to transportation to Van Diemen's Land. McManus and Meagher accompanied him. In 1854 he was granted an unconditional pardon. He returned to Ireland after a voyage to America, and died in 1864, being buried at Rathcronan, County Limerick.

Meagher escaped from captivity in Van Diemen's Land in 1852. Mitchel also escaped, as did one or two others. Mitchel and Meagher took opposite sides in the American Civil War—for both had fled to America—the former the Southern or Confederate side, and the

latter who rose to the rank of Brigadier-General—showing that he did know something about the sword he had so eloquently advocated—fighting in many battles on the Northern or Federal side. Meagher raised a Zouave company and fought at Bull's Run, where the Irish "saved the Federal forces from annihilation on that field of disaster." Subsequently he organised and commanded the American Irish Brigade of the 2nd Army Corps. Like the French Irish Brigade, it "won imperishable laurels throughout the hard-fought campaigns that ended with the capture of Richmond." Meagher himself led the historic charge at Fredericksburg in the teeth of the enemy's guns. In that dreadful fight the Brigade was nearly destroyed, fighting brother Irishmen, the Georgian militia enlisted under the star-dotted St. Andrew's Cross of the South.

The smooth hill is bare, and the cannons are planted,  
 Like Gorgon fates shading its terrible brow,  
 The word has been passed that the stormers are wanted,  
 And Burnside's battalions are mustering now.

Strong earthworks are there, and the rifles behind them  
 Are Georgian militia—an Irish brigade—  
 Their caps have green badges as if to remind them  
 Of all the brave record their country has made. . .

What is it in these that shall now do the storming,  
 That makes every Georgian spring to his feet? . . .  
 "'Tis Meagher and his fellows! their caps bear green clover,  
 'Tis Greek to Greek now for the rest of the fight!"

Twelve hundred the column, their rent flag before them—  
 With Meagher at their head they have dashed at the hill!  
 Their foemen are proud of the country that bore them;  
 But, Irish in love, they are enemies still . . .



It is Green against Green, but a principle stifles  
The Irishman's love in the Georgian's blow.

The column has reeled, but it is not defeated ;  
In front of the guns they reform and attack,  
Six times they have done it, and six times retreated—  
*Twelve hundred they came, and two hundred go back. . .*

Bright honour be theirs who for honour were fearless,  
Who charged for their flag to the grim cannon's mouth ;  
And honour to those who were true, though not *tearless*—  
Who bravely, that day, kept the cause of the South.\*

On the cessation of the Civil War, Meagher was made Governor of Montana Territory, in the Far West, and descending the great Missouri river by steamer, one wild, dark night, in July, 1867, he fell overboard and was never seen again. He was a finished scholar, a genial friend, a matchless orator, but above all and before all, a soldier.

Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, in 1871, became Prime Minister of Victoria, Australia, and Thomas D'Arcy Magee, a minister of the crown in Canada. Magee has left as his best memorial one of the ablest histories of Ireland we possess

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\* From John Boyle O'Reilly's well-known poem, "Fredericksburg."

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## JAMES STEPHENS AND THE FENIAN MOVEMENT.

The failure of the '48, or Young Ireland, revolt did not deter two of those who had taken part in it from still pinning their hopes of effecting Irish independence to force of arms; and, in 1858, these two men, James Stephens, the youth we referred to as being wounded at Ballingarry, and John O'Mahony, conspired to work on the lines of Wolfe Tone and establish a secret, oath-bound organisation for the promotion and furtherance of another armed insurrection.

Stephens came to Ireland for that purpose, and O'Mahony went through America. The society, first known as "the Phoenix Society," gradually changed its name into that of "the Fenian Brotherhood," at the suggestion of O'Mahony, who was fond of ancient Irish lore and chose the name from the oldtime Fenians or national Milesian militia.

Stephens himself, though, preferred, and gave more particularly to the Irish branch of the conspiracy, the name of the "I.R.B.", or "Irish Republican Brotherhood," of which he called himself the C.O.I.R., or "Central Organiser of the Irish Republic."

It was the time of the Indian Mutiny and the occasion seemed propitious. Stephens met with great success

in Ireland, most of the young men in Cork and Kerry joining his society, among others Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, Charles Kickham, Thomas Clarke Luby, and John O'Leary, who became prominent leaders. As a secret society, however, the Catholic Church condemned Fenianism. Nevertheless, thousands of Irish exiles in America joined the movement, and took part in the great civil war between North and South solely for the purpose of learning the use of arms and "returning with rifles on their shoulders to free their native land."

Most Irishmen in Great Britain at this time belonged to the perfectly open and legitimate "Brotherhood of St. Patrick," the single object of which was "to compass the union of Irishmen for the achievement of Irish independence." From this organisation Fenianism drew most of its recruits; and great impulse was given to the new revolutionary movement by the remarkable national demonstration which was made the occasion of the funeral of Terence Bellew McManus, one of the '48 or Young Ireland party. He had escaped from Van Dieman's Land in 1851, and had just died in California. His body was brought, attended by a powerful escort, all the way from San Francisco and buried in Glasnevin, Dublin, in presence of 50,000 men and under the most impressive circumstances, on Sunday, November 10th, 1861.

In November, 1863, Stephens started the "Irish People" newspaper as the organ of Fenianism, and this paper openly preached insurrection until September 1865, when the authorities swooped down on the office, seized all the documents and plant, and arrested Rossa, Luby, O'Leary, and others. Stephens evaded arrest

at the time, but was later tracked to Fairfield House, Sandymount, outside Dublin, where the police effected an entry and his capture. This was on November 11th. In the dock of the police-court, he spoke fearlessly and defiantly; and a few days later the utmost consternation and alarm prevailed in Government circles, for he had escaped from Richmond Gaol, Dublin, where he had been incarcerated!

This remarkable and historic escape or rescue was effected by two warders, named John J. Breslin and Daniel Byrne, who were in secret sympathy with the Fenians, if not actually members of the brotherhood at the time. They entered into communication with Colonel Thomas Kelly, Stephens' successor as head of the conspiracy and one of the Irish-American officers who were to lead the rebel forces in the field. Kelly, Devoy, and about a dozen others, all sworn members of the brotherhood, armed with revolvers, waited outside the prison walls, while Breslin and Byrne opened Stephens's cell-door, and with the ladder used for lighting the lamps, set against the inner wall on top of two tables, one upon another, enabled him to get into the governor's garden.

"He walked over to a pear tree, indicated by Breslin, which grew close to the outer wall and which would aid him in climbing it. Hearing no footsteps outside he took a handful of sand and flung it over the outer wall into the Circular Road." (Denvir).

Kelly's party were on the alert outside, and at once threw a rope over. Stephens climbed up it to the top of the wall and then dropped down in the midst of his friends, who crowded together to break the fall, from the



height of 18 feet. Breslin and Byrne escaped detection and fled to America ; while Stephens was successfully concealed, and then drove one night with Colonel Kelly down to the quays in an open car and slipped aboard a fishing hooker at the North Wall. The vessel, bound for France, was compelled by stormy weather to put into Ayr, whence Stephens travelled in the mail train to London, dressed as a seafaring man. He then made his way to Calais, *viâ* Dover. A big reward was offered for his re-capture in vain.

Mr. James O'Connor, M.P., who was introduced to James Stephens in 1858 in Cork, has given the following description of him. " Although he was then but thirty-four years of age, he struck me mainly on account of his complete baldness as a man of fifty or more. His height was about five feet eight ; he was squarely and compactly built, he had a long fair beard and heavy moustache ; his movements were quick, his mind and judgment remarkably alert and decisive. His clear, sharp blue eye was the most striking feature of his handsome face. So keen and penetrating was his glance that the Skibbereen men called him *Seabac*, pronounced 'shouk,' which the Press subsequently turned into Mr. 'Shook.'" It is probable, though, that he was shorter than 5 ft. 8 in., for he was often affectionately referred to by his lieutenants, mostly big men, as " the little man."

Stephens' face was of a most amiable, kindly type, so much so that an English friend of the author's, happening to see a portrait of him, asked, " Who was that noble-looking, benevolent old gentleman ? " " That," the author responded, " was the Fenian

Head Centre." "H'm! There must certainly have been something radically wrong when a man like that promoted insurrection," the Englishman replied.

Stephens' face was somewhat square, his beard, too, was squared, his nose aquiline but broad, and his brow noble and expansive, the dignity of his appearance being added to by his extreme baldness and the fact that he wore his hair at the back rather long and curling.

## CHAPTER XXXII.

## THE RISING OF THE 5TH OF MARCH, '67.

In America, meanwhile, the Fenians under Colonel William R. Roberts determined to invade Canada, and Colonel John O'Neill led one small battalion of Irish veterans of the Civil War across the border and attacked Fort Erie on May 31st, 1866. He took possession of the place, hauled down the royal flag and hoisted the rebel one of green and gold with the crownless harp in its stead. Some troops marched against O'Neill, who encountered them at a village called Ridgeway, and routed them. The American government, however, promptly interfered and the Fenians were obliged to submit.

Stephens, known now as the Head Centre, announced the outbreak of the revolt in Ireland for 1867, and many Irish-American officers like Brigadier-General Thomas Francis Burke, General Halpin, Colonel Rickard Burke, and others, spread themselves through the country in order to command the insurgents, living in concealment the while. Early in February, 1867, one of these Irish-American officers, Captain John M'Cafferty, conceived the idea of concentrating Fenians from all parts of England upon Chester Castle in Cheshire, and seizing 20,000 stand of arms stored there, then, impress-

ing the rolling stock or trucks on the railway, travelling swiftly to Holyhead, capturing the vessels at the quays there, and, having destroyed the telegraphic communication with London and Dublin, crossing the Channel to Ireland and starting the insurrection.

The plot failed through an informer named Corydon, and the 2,000 Fenians who turned up at Chester, found the Castle impregably defended by a strong force of military. Such was the perfection of the raiders' organisation, however, that no arrests appear to have been made at the time, and the whole of the Fenians "disappeared as quietly and mysteriously as they came." M'Cafferty, who had been a captain in Morgan's famous guerillas on the Southern side in the American civil war, was, however, traced to Whitehaven and arrested there with a Fenian organiser named Flood.

The promised "rising" took place on the 5th March, 1867, and, easily crushed though it was, it surprised England and the Executive by the formidable proportions it might easily have assumed. But it failed principally through lack of arms. Bands of men, under various leaders, attacked and in many cases captured police-barracks and coastguard stations, but a heavy snowstorm raged, accompanied by intense cold, and all the mountain and country roads were impassable. The Dublin men, under Patrick Lennon, a deserter from the 9th Lancers, Patrick Doran, and Denis Duggan, who had been in the London Irish Volunteers, surrounded the police-barracks at Stepaside, between one and two on the Wednesday morning, and summoned the inmates to surrender.

On their refusal, the assailants fired into the barracks



and applied lighted straw to one of the lower windows, whereupon the police surrendered. They were disarmed and made prisoners, and the Fenian band then proceeded to Glencullen and Milltown barracks, which they also captured. Lennon, the leader here, was to command the cavalry in the Dublin district under General Halpin, who was to take supreme command in Leinster. Halpin, however, declined to lead men in so hopeless a struggle, when he saw how ill-armed and betrayed they were, and, after the above success, advised them to disperse. He himself was arrested.

Another band of Dublin men, a thousand strong, marched out to Tallaght, "unarmed, except for a few pikes, some shot guns and an occasional revolver." They were met by a volley from a body of police waiting at the appointed rendezvous and routed, a number of them being captured.

In Drogheda some thousand Fenians assembled, to put themselves under the command of Colonel Leonard. The police arrived and fired on them, when a brisk fusilade took place, resulting in the killing and wounding of several of the rebel band and the capture of more. At Clonmel 300 Fenians were attacked by the 31st Foot and the Constabulary, and put to flight after a surprisingly stubborn engagement, in which several rebels were killed, and some eighteen taken prisoners, with 150 stand of arms. This band seems to have been fairly well armed.

Two hundred armed Fenians seized Kilmallock, County Limerick, and blockaded the police barracks. More constabulary were hurried up, and in a pitched

battle three of the Fenians were killed and a great many wounded.

Under General Thomas Francis Burke, late of the American Confederate Army, something like 2,000 peasantry mustered at an old Danish fort in Tipperary. The spot was known as Ballyhurst Fort and was a tree and ditch-encircled rath, a place that with arms might have been a strong position. Burke and three others were mounted. The 31st Regiment and a troop of carbineers advanced against the fort, and from it the Fenians fired on them. Burke, however, perceiving the strength of the attacking force, realised the futility of further resistance, and, as the military prepared to charge at the point of the bayonet, bade his men scatter and seek safety in flight and the darkness of the night. Most of them got away, but Burke himself was taken, a hundred yards off, as he was sliding from his horse to conceal himself. Some sixty pikes were afterwards picked up in and around the fort.

The coastguard station at Kilrush, in Clare, was captured and all the arms carried off, but at Ardagh, Co. Limerick, the assailants were repulsed. At Middleton a Fenian band was repulsed, but captured a patrol of four constables, and was afterwards defeated and dispersed at Castlemartyr, the leader, Daly, being shot dead. The Fenians were likewise repulsed in Waterford, but they ransacked the police barracks at Aherloe, and burnt those at Ardmore, near Mallow, as also those at Bottle, Co. Cork. A cart, full of pikes and pistols, concealed under straw, was captured "through information received" in the streets of Dublin itself, and stores of arms were seized in other places.

“Captain Mackey,” whose real name was Captain William Francis Lomasney, an Irish-American officer, captured Ballyknockane police barrack. He escaped at the time and became a sort of Rob Roy or Michael Dwyer, for later, months after, with a chosen band, he seized the martello-tower at Foaty, making prisoners of the gunners, and raided two or more gunmakers’ shops, carrying off what arms and ammunition they could.

Another Fenian leader was James Francis Xavier O’Brien, who as a youth had taken part in the ’48 insurrection. O’Brien was sentenced to death for his share in the Fenian rising, but lived to represent South Mayo in the British Parliament under the leadership of Parnell and later of Justin MacCarthy.

Captain John Kirwan, a veteran of the Papal Guard in Italy, and a Knight of the Order of St. Sylvester or the Golden Spur, was shot through the lungs and taken prisoner in another affair outside Dublin where a police barracks was captured. He escaped, was recaptured, and escaped a second time to America. It was after the battle of Castelfidardo that he was made a Knight of the Order of St. Sylvester “for having been the first to cross the River Musone under a heavy artillery fire.”

The sergeant in charge of Carrick-on-Suir Fort, McCarthy by name, had become a Fenian. He conspired to surrender the fort to his confederates, but was in his turn betrayed by a supposed friend, Head-Constable Talbot. Thomas Hassett, a deserter from the 24th Foot, in which regiment he is said to have sworn in as Fenians no less than 270 of his comrades, had

suggested that the Dublin men should seize the Pigeon House, which contained 25,000 stand of arms. A guard of 90 soldiers had been placed in it, "and of these 60 were Fenians." His proposal, however, was not acted on. Sentenced to penal servitude for life later, he was one of six military prisoners rescued in 1876 by the "Catalpa," as we relate in its place.

The most notable skirmish of the entire rising, however—the one that caused the greatest sensation and stir was that at Kilcloney Wood, near Mitchelstown.

Captain John McClure, Edward Kelly, and Peter O'Neill Crowley, after the capture of Knockadoon coastguard station, fought the soldiers some time in a wood. When their ammunition was spent, and they were crossing a river, Crowley was shot dead. Captain McClure, who was only 21, and Kelly were captured and sentenced to death, the punishment being afterwards commuted to imprisonment for life. It was the death of Crowley, who was greatly esteemed in the neighbourhood for his hitherto quiet, blameless life, that gave the affair so much *éclat* in the popular estimation.

A General or Colonel Godfrey Massey was to have been commander-in-chief in Munster. He was arrested at Limerick Junction, proceeding to the rendezvous, just as he stepped from the train, and, seeing that he had been betrayed, he forthwith turned round on all his associates and gave information against them. The great informer, though, was John Joseph Corydon, a Liverpool man. It was he revealed the Chester Castle plot.

In Kerry, near Cahirciveen, a premature outbreak



had occurred on the 12th of February, a Colonel O'Connor leading the insurgents. The date of the rising had originally been fixed for the 12th of February, and word of its postponement had failed to reach O'Connor and his band. On learning of their mistake they promptly dissolved, O'Connor escaping capture.

General Thomas Burke, Patrick Doran, and others were put upon their trial. Burke, as we have said, had been in the American Confederate or Southern army. He had sustained a fractured leg in the war, from which he returned breveted Brigadier-General. At his trial he made a speech "that was probably one of the most eloquent ever delivered," to quote a prominent detective who was present in court. Burke denied that Massey, who had turned approver, had ever worn the star of a colonel in the Confederate army. Only twenty-seven years of age, Burke was a splendid-looking man, and his general appearance, with the pathos of his injured limb, "made a great impression on everyone who saw and heard him." He had a sternly handsome, manly face with a full flowing brown beard, "cut closely from the ear to the point of the jaw, and his bearing was most soldierly and dignified." He had served in the cavalry and "dragged the left leg as if accustomed to wear a sword."

In his speech, he said that "he asked for no mercy, that he felt that, with his emaciated frame and somewhat shattered constitution, it was better that his life should be brought to an end than that he should drag out a miserable existence in the dens of Portland."

"I have ties to bind me to life and society as strong as any man in this court. . . . But I can remember

the blessing I received from an aged mother's lips as I left her the last time. She, speaking as the Spartan mother did, said 'Go, my boy, return either with your shield or upon it.' This reconciles me—this gives me heart. I submit to my doom. . . I hope also that, inasmuch as God has for 700 years preserved Ireland, notwithstanding all the tyranny to which she has been subjected, as a separate and distinct nationality, He will also assist her to retrieve her fallen fortunes—to rise in her beauty and majesty the Sister of Columbia, the peer of any nation in the world."

He made this thrilling declamation, grasping the rail of the dock with his left hand and holding up his head proudly, his full rich beard sweeping his broad breast, his eyes all aglow—a truly impressive, and as we have said, pathetic figure.

The judge sentenced him and Patrick Doran to be hanged, drawn and quartered. Burke "listened to the death sentence calmly and without emotion or bravado."

Two days later, Mr. John Bright, the famous English statesman, presented a petition to the House of Commons protesting against the sentences of "excessive and irritating severity" passed upon the two Fenians and begging "that the punishments might be more applicable to men whose crime and whose offence are alike free from dishonour, however misled they may be."

Burke and Doran were not executed. Their sentences were commuted to imprisonment, and Burke was ultimately released at the request of the American Government.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

## THE MANCHESTER RESCUE.

As we have shown, many Fenians were in the British army. John Boyle O'Reilly, a most talented poet and writer, and afterwards editor of the Boston "Pilot," enlisted in the 10th Hussars to win over as many of his comrades as possible to Fenianism. Out of the 100 Irishmen in the regiment he converted 80 to his way of thinking, but others "gave him away," and he and his principal converts were arrested.

"Confound you, O'Reilly!" shouted Colonel Valentine Baker, the commander of the corps, shaking his fist in the prisoner's face, as he crossed the barrack square under arrest, "you have ruined the finest regiment in the service."

Boyle O'Reilly, Colour-Sergeant MacCarthy, Corporal Chambers and others were all transported, but O'Reilly escaped later

On the 20th of May, a mysterious brigantine appeared hovering off the coast of Sligo, and entered Sligo Bay. She had on board 28 Irish-American officers, and 5,000 stand of arms, three guns, and a million and a half rounds of ammunition for the arming of the insurrectionary forces. The brigantine was named originally the "Jacmel," which name was altered at sea to the

“ Erin’s Hope.” The commander of the expedition was Brigadier-General John F. Kavanagh, who had been a member of the American Congress. He produced and distributed Fenian commissions and sealed orders, hoisted the green flag with the sunburst, and fired the three heavy guns they had aboard in salute. Other Irish-American officers on board were Colonel Nagle, Colonel Warren, Colonel Kerrigan, and Lieutenant Augustine Costello.

The vessel had slipped out of New York without papers or colours and without awakening suspicion, and safely run the gauntlet of the British revenue cutters. Sailing out again, near Dungarvan she landed the Irish-American officers and men, who were however all quickly laid by the heels by the watchful authorities.

As the occasion was not deemed propitious for the landing of the arms and stores, the “ Erin’s Hope ” sailed back to America and escaped the cruisers sent to look for her.

Colonel Kelly, who had succeeded Stephens as head of the Fenian organisation, and was planning another revolt, was arrested with his aide-de-camp, a Captain Deasy, in the early morning of September 11th, 1867, at Manchester, England. The local Fenians determined, under the command of Captains O’Meagher Condon and Michael O’Brien, two Irish-American officers, to intercept the prison van on its way from the court to Belle Vue Gaol. Escorting the van were twelve armed policemen, four sitting in front with the driver, two on the steps behind, and four others following in a cab, while Sergeant Brett rode inside the van.

Where the London and North Western railway arch



crossed the Hyde Road obliquely, two men, armed with revolvers, suddenly sprang in front of the van, crying "Stop the van." At the same moment out from behind the walls that lined the road poured a band of about thirty or forty more, dressed like superior artisans, who fired pistol shots and flung stones over the heads of the police escort. One of the first two men shot down one of the horses; and on this the whole of the police on the van scrambled or were dragged from it and retreated.

Half the assailants then formed a wide circle round the van and held off the police and the crowd that began to collect with pointed revolvers and occasional shots in the air, while the other half attacked the van with all manner of tools, trying to force the door and burst open the sides. Sergeant Brett was ordered to hand out the keys or open the door. He heroically refused, whereupon a shot was fired through the lock with a view to bursting this. Brett received the bullet in the brain, just over the eye, and was killed instantly; and then a woman prisoner in the van handed the keys out through the ventilator. The top of the van by this had been pounded to chips.

Colonel Kelly and Captain Deasy were hurried away by some of their rescuers, while the main body covered their retreat. Neither was recaptured. They were hidden in Manchester for some months after. Kelly eventually reached Liverpool, and was smuggled aboard one of the old National Line of steamers by an Irish foreman ship's carpenter, named James Egan. The National liners sailed from the Wellington dock. Egan built the Fenian chief up in a secret compartment

in the bunkers or bulk heading, where he was kept supplied with food by a friend aboard until the steamer was well at sea. A ticket had been obtained for him, and so he freely mingled then with the other passengers.

Egan, by the way, was very proud of two duelling pistols he possessed, and which had formerly belonged to the well-known O'Connellite duellist, "Fireball MacNamara." The author, then a small boy at school, met Egan in the 'eighties, and remembers him as a very erect, well set-up old man, with thick snow-white hair.

A great number of suspects were subsequently arrested in Manchester for the van rescue, and five men, Captain Michael O'Brien, the Irish-American officer, who gave his name as William Gould at first; an artisan named Michael Larkin; a Royal Marine, by name Thomas Maguire; a young carpenter named William Philip Allen; and Captain O'Meagher Condon, who gave the name of Edward Shore when arrested, were found guilty of Sergeant Brett's death, and sentenced to capital punishment. Seven others were condemned to five years' penal servitude. Fourteen more who had been arrested were discharged.

The death of Brett was clearly a case of manslaughter, and many prominent Englishmen interested themselves to try and obtain a reprieve for all five doomed men, while great was the indignation expressed at their being handcuffed in the dock before they had been found guilty, a thing practically unknown in a British criminal court.

As at Mitchel's trial in '48, a most dramatic incident occurred when the five men were asked why sentence

of death should not be passed upon them, after the verdict of guilty. Captain O'Meagher Condon, in addressing the court, said :

" We are not afraid to die—at least I am not."

" Nor I ! " " Nor I ! " " Nor I ! " promptly and proudly cried his companions, and Condon, continuing, exclaimed : " I have nothing to regret or to retract, or take back. I can only say GOD SAVE IRELAND ! "

His companions took up the cry. " God Save Ireland ! " they all repeated proudly, raising their manacled hands aloft, and, as they passed from the dock, they again shouted " God Save Ireland ! "—a cry that has become a watchword since with many Irishmen.

Condon's sentence was commuted, and Maguire was released, but Allen, Larkin, and O'Brien were hanged, and are always referred to to-day as " the Manchester Martyrs."

Up to the last it was firmly believed that the death sentence would not be carried out in their case even. The evidence was clearly most untrustworthy. In the first place Thomas Maguire, who was shown to have not been near the scene of the rescue, nor ever to have had anything to do with Fenianism, had been found guilty of murder, along with Allen, Larkin, O'Brien and Condon. So evident was it that perjury was committed by some of the witnesses against him, that thirty newspaper men sent up a petition to the Home Secretary the same evening as he was sentenced, protesting their belief that he was innocent. He was pardoned—for what he had not done. And it is alleged that O'Meagher Condon was only reprieved because of his being an American citizen. Condon certainly took part in

the rescue, and is supposed to have driven from the court in a cab preceding the prison van, to notify the assailants of its approach. "It is rumoured in well-informed quarters," the newspapers of the time reported, "that the clemency of the crown will be extended to Larkin, Gould (O'Brien) and Shore (Condon), their sentences being commuted to penal servitude for life."

From this, and the evidence, it would seem that it was Allen who fired the fatal shot, and he apparently had a pistol on that day.

But the popular clamour in England for vengeance upon the Fenians was too great for the weak-kneed authorities, and accordingly Allen, Larkin and O'Brien suffered. To show, however, that all the English people did not think these three men guilty of murder, the Dowager Marchioness of Queensberry sent them a most touching letter of condolence and hope in the hereafter, asking for the addresses of their families and enclosing £100, "with the assurance that, so long as she lived, they should be cared for to the utmost of her power." Larkin, the only one of the three married, "burst into tears; the other prisoners were also deeply affected" by this letter.

As they stood on the scaffold O'Brien kissed his companions and whispered in their ears words, no doubt, of encouragement and hope beyond the grave.

The three executions took place on the morning of Saturday, November 23rd, 1867, before an exulting rabble—executions were public then—and the news fell upon Ireland "with sudden and dismal disillusion." Public feeling manifested itself in Requiem Masses in the Catholic Churches all over the country, and funeral



processions at which thousands attended. The funeral procession in Cork was most imposing, while in Dublin not less than 60,000 persons marched, through rain and mud, behind three huge, black-draped, empty hearses, bearing in large white letters on the side of each the name of one of the executed men. Mr. A. M. Sullivan and John Martin were afterwards prosecuted for a violation of the "Party Procession Act," and Mr. Sullivan, who, in the dock, delivered a most eloquent and trenchant denunciation of the Manchester trial and executions received six months' imprisonment. His brother, T. D. Sullivan's well-known song "God Save Ireland" is a lasting epitaph for the three Manchester Martyrs, and has become the National anthem.

Some desperate and reckless spirits next attempted to blow in the wall of Clerkenwell Gaol, London, with a keg of gunpowder, on December 13th, 1867, hoping to thus effect the escape of Colonel Rickard Burke, Casey, and other Fenian prisoners. It was the maddest of schemes, and the explosion caused the deaths of several innocent poor people in the adjacent streets and terribly injured a great many more. A man named Michael Barrett, known as the "handsome Irishman," was hanged for this insane act; and after that Fenianism subsided, its last memorable exploit being the rescue in 1876, of six military Fenian prisoners from the convict settlement of Freemantle, Australia, by the whaling barque "Catalpa," fitted out in America for the purpose. The escape was engineered by the two men who were mainly responsible for that of Stephens from Richmond Gaol, namely, John Breslin and John Devoy. An armed steamer, the "Georgette," pursued the

"Catalpa," but the latter's captain, being on the high seas, refused to stop and defied the pursuers, who did not care about risking international complications by firing on the American flag which he was flying, and so let him and the Fenian refugees go.





## PART X.

### HOME RULE.

Shall mine eyes behold thy glory, O my country ?  
Shall mine eyes behold thy glory ?  
Or shall the darkness close around them, ere  
The sun-blaze beat at last upon thy story ?

When the nations ope for thee their queenly circle,  
As a sweet new sister hail thee,  
Shall these lips be sealed in callous death and silence,  
That have known but to bewail thee ?

From "After Death," by FANNY PARNELL.





## CHAPTER XXXIV.

## THE HOME RULE AGITATION.—THE PHOENIX PARK TRAGEDY.

The Fenian Movement is said to have brought Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, the great English statesman, to see some of the iniquities under which Ireland laboured—to have indeed converted him to a new way of thinking as regarded this country. Certain it is that as soon as he was placed in power after the General Election of 1868, he brought forward a Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church, "that great scandal and iniquity" as the noble-hearted English reformer, John Stuart Mill, called it.

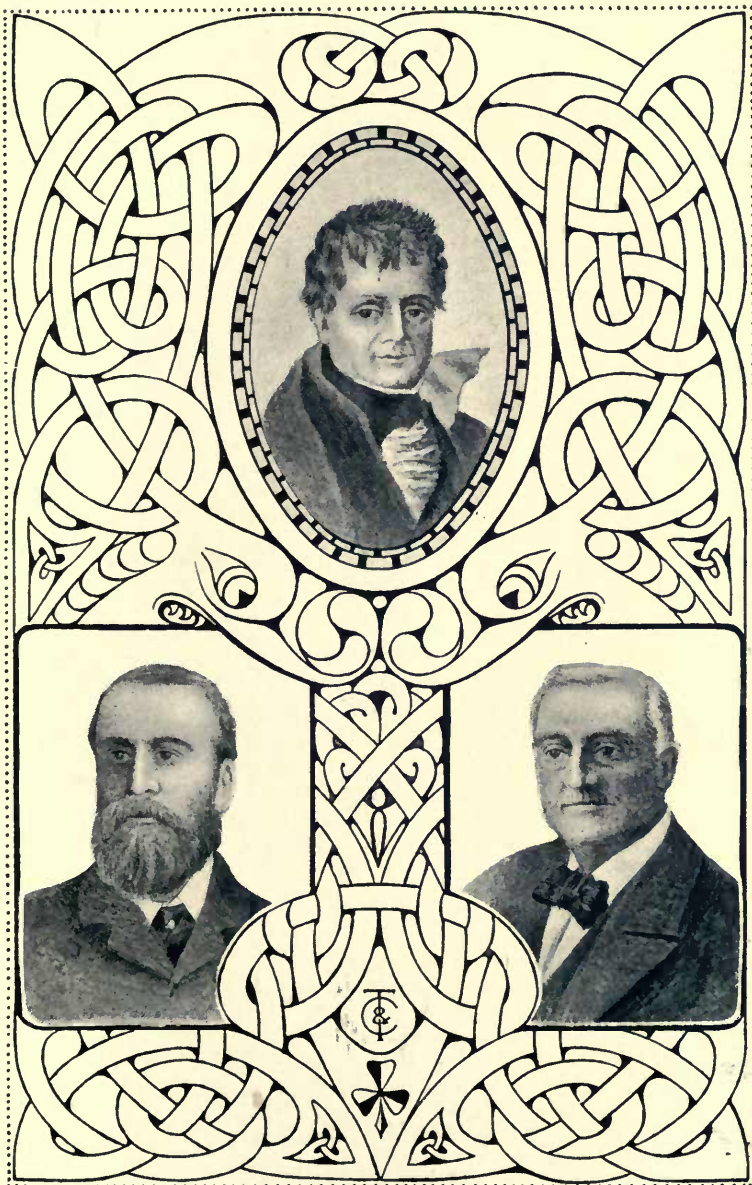
In March, 1869, Gladstone introduced his Bill, speaking for three hours upon it. The Irish State Church was a gross anomaly as well as outrageous piece of injustice, come down from the Penal Days. "Taking only the Episcopalian Protestants (who alone wanted it), the Catholics outnumbered them by seven to one." Yet the seven had to pay for the upkeep of the church, bishops and all, for that one. "In Munster the State Church counted only one in twenty; in Connaught one in 25, in Ulster not more than one in 5. A large number of parishes had not a single Protestant, and even from these an absentee minister drew a substantial

salary." (D'Alton.) In some fine handsome churches not half a dozen persons ever met, while the great mass of the people round attended the poor little Catholic chapel.

No one could justify such "intolerable robbery," as another outspoken Englishman called it. But the Tory and Church party raised a howl of "spoliation and sacrilege and confiscation," and the writer remembers seeing a cartoon depicting Gladstone, John Bright, and others of these fair-minded Englishmen who sought to uproot such a foul Upas-tree, as Cromwellian soldiers revelling in a Church and stabling their horses also in the sacred fane.

But the Bill passed, although the Lords tried to mangle it. Their amendments were rejected, and Queen Victoria's intervention, along with other causes, enabled Gladstone, John Bright, and the rest of the Government to carry the day. The Bill was passed, received the Royal assent, and on January 1st, 1871, something over a year later, the Irish State Church ceased to be, to the great joy of all true-minded Irishmen, and its bishops could no longer sit in the House of Lords. Church property, etc., was calculated as worth nearly £16,000,000, and it received nearly eleven million in payment, to satisfy vested interests, compensations to clergymen, etc. The surplus five million was set aside for purposes of public utility in the country it had so long and shamelessly plundered.

Most Irishmen were now again desirous, if they had not always been, of trying the effect of moral force, of trying to obtain their aims by constitutional methods such as O'Connell had sanctioned and practi-



C. S. Parnell

Daniel O'Connell

John Redmond





cally inaugurated, after, perhaps, Grattan and Flood. Such men as A. M. Sullivan had all along been on the side of such peaceful measures and opposed to the violent ones of the Fenians, and the fairmindedness of the English Government and great Liberal party upon the Irish State Church question augured well now for the success of this milder policy.

In 1870, Gladstone tackled the land question, and passed a Land Act—the first we notice of so very, very many. It legalised a custom called “tenant right,” hitherto only appertaining in Ulster, “established a system analogous to it in the other provinces.” This “tenant right” was, that so long as a farmer paid his rent he should be undisturbed in his holding and be at liberty to sell the “goodwill” of his farm to a purchaser, and demand compensation from his landlord, on surrendering his holding, for unexhausted improvements. It was a kind of “peasant proprietary,” such as John Stuart Mill and John Bright, and other great souls advocated. But the landlords in many cases contrived to evade the provisions of the Act; and so it was in great measure a failure. Successive bad harvests also prevented the tenants being able to pay the rack-rents demanded, and no less than 10,000 evictions took place during the next five years!

On this an agitation arose again for the repeal of the Union, as the source of all the trouble, and to this end a Mr. Isaac Butt and a Mr. John Barry started what they called the “Home Rule Confederation, or League,” of Great Britain.

The Home Rule agitation differed somewhat from the Repeal agitation. Whereas “a mere repeal of the Union

would leave the Irish Parliament free to meddle with Imperial matters—Grattan's Parliament had the right to grant or withhold supplies for Imperial purposes—but would yet allow the English Cabinet to appoint the Irish Executive, the new scheme would have purely Irish affairs managed by an Irish Parliament and Imperial matters by the British assembly." (O'Sullivan's "Brief Survey of Irish History.") Strange to say, Isaac Butt had been opposed to O'Connell, and a Conservative in his early life.\* He now proved himself an able leader, and the new movement carried the country by storm, although it met with considerable opposition in England.

Before long, Mr. Joseph Biggar, M.P., initiated the policy of "Obstruction" with a view to forcing English politicians not to lightly reject Irish measures or flout the opinions of the Irish people. Charles Stewart Parnell, one of the youngest Irish members, supported Biggar in the new policy; but for a time they stood almost alone even amongst their own party in support of it. Mr. Butt disapproved of this new or "active" policy, as Biggar and Parnell themselves called it, but after the close of the Parliamentary session in 1877, a great meeting was held in the Rotunda, Dublin, in support of Mr. Biggar and Mr. Parnell, and their policy of persistent and merciless "obstruction."

In the words of A. M. Sullivan, this policy was briefly, "If nothing was to be done for Ireland, then no business whatever was to be done, or at least, no English

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\* O'Connell had prophesied that before long he would be on his side. He afterwards acted as advocate for many of the Fenians on their trials, and he defended Gavan Duffy in 1848.

reform was to be permitted to pass without endless difficulty." This was carrying the war into the enemy's camp with a vengeance. Englishmen did not want to be troubled about Ireland; they had something else to think of—their own affairs. "Quite so," practically said Mr. Biggar and Parnell, "then give us Home Rule and we'll leave you in peace. Refuse it to us, and, by our using the procedure of the House, we will prevent you doing anything for your own country, doing any business at all, we will reduce things in this House to a state of chaos and absolute nullity."

Parnell showed himself a past-master in the art, going about it with a deadly intensity, yet "in the calmest possible way." Biggar was more ostentatious and "was certainly the best-hated Irishman in England at that time." Most of the Irish Parliamentary party were gradually won over by the two obstructionists; the country went over to them wholeheartedly; and, in the same year, 1877, Butt, who had hitherto been elected as the annual President of the Home Rule Confederation of Great Britain, was dethroned at a meeting at Liverpool and Parnell took his place. Mr. Butt "still clung to the old methods, and at a conference of Irish members in the City Hall, Dublin, he violently assailed Obstruction as ruinous to Irish interests."

In the following year, "he asked in indignation how any right-minded man could take the oath of allegiance to the Queen and then use his power as a member of Parliament to thwart and baffle all her measures." This gratified English public opinion, but it estranged many of his own party, and, seeing that Parnell had the mass of the Irish people with him, he wished to resign.



He was persuaded to remain, but in May of the next year he fell ill and died, many thought of disappointment.

Parnell was now the leading figure in Irish Parliamentary affairs. He was a young Protestant country gentleman of Avondale, County Wicklow, and was a descendant of the Hon. Sir John Parnell, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Grattan's Parliament. Sir John refused to support the Union, and was incorruptible, as Sir Jonah Barrington records. He and his son Henry stood by Grattan to the last. Charles Stewart Parnell was born at the ancestral mansion of Avondale in 1846, and so was 32 years of age at this time. He inherited from his mother, a daughter of Commodore Stewart of the American Navy, a bitter hatred of England, yet he was cold and unemotional, without any of the wit or fire or enthusiasm of the average Irishman.

To give an idea of how lacking in humour he was, he could not for the life of him understand why a crowd that he was addressing once, in favour of a candidate at an election named Kettle, laughed heartily when he chanced to say that "Mr. Kettle's name was a household word in Ireland."

He was no orator either, but—he was a born leader of men and preferred to say what he had got to say in as few words as possible. Elected in 1875 for Meath, he had sat for that and the following session silent and watchful, hardly opening his mouth. *He was learning the rules of the House!* He was heard of pretty much the next year. A man of iron resolution, like Dickens's character in "Hard Times," all he asked for was "facts,"

hard facts." He had a tall, commanding presence, and a strong, handsome, bearded face ; the brow was broad and high, the nose a firm aquiline ; the jaw bold and determined ; the eyes fearless, challenging, inscrutable ; the eyebrows thick, and very slightly arched.

Mr. William Shaw had succeeded Butt as Home Rule leader, but he had not the majority of the Party with him. It had now gone over to Parnell, and Shaw was deposed. Parnell who, with Mr. John Dillon, had been to America and received a tremendous ovation everywhere there, led his followers across the floor of the House to the Tory ranks. Mr. Shaw's supporters, on the other hand, who were known as "Nominal Home Rulers," remained on the Whig or Liberal side, but soon after they disappeared altogether from the scene of action.

Mr. Parnell counted now among his followers many whose names have since become as famous as his own, John Dillon, already mentioned, Joseph Biggar, Justin McCarthy, T. P. O'Connor, T. D. Sullivan (the famous Alexander M. Sullivan's poetic brother), and Thomas Sexton. Michael Davitt, the son of an evicted Mayo peasant, came to the front also now. He had been imprisoned for his share in the Fenian movement. Though he had lost his right arm in a mill in Lancashire, where he had worked as a boy, he took part in the attempted raid on Chester Castle and had gone about the country afterwards buying arms for the Fenians. He now founded the "Land League," an organisation for "the abolition of the existing landlord system and the introduction of peasant proprietorship." Parnell took up the idea and the Irish National Land League

"became the most powerful political organisation that had been formed in Ireland since the Union." (Justin H. McCarthy.)

All rackrenters and evictors were "boycotted," a word adopted in lieu of "ostracised," which it means, from Captain Boycott, a landlord's agent, the first victim of the system. The "landgrabber" was tabooed in a word, by all his neighbours. Shopkeepers and tradesmen refused to serve him or deal with him, labourers to work for him. So disturbed did the country now become that the Government brought in a Coercion Act, and Michael Davitt and John Dillon were arrested.

In the preceding November, Mr. Parnell, Mr. John Dillon, Mr. Biggar, Mr. T. D. Sullivan and Mr. Thomas Sexton were summoned with others to appear before the Court of Queen's Bench, to answer allegations of conspiracy, made at the instance of the Attorney-General, relative to the dreadful agrarian outrages that were occurring all over Ireland. Lord Leitrim, who seems to have borne a rather unenviable reputation and whose moral character was apparently not above reproach, had been murdered, it is supposed as an act of private, rather than agrarian, vengeance. His murderer was never traced. A Mr. Boyd and Lord Mountmorres were also murdered, shot to death by masked moonlighters. Galway was "proclaimed," "and Mr. Parnell retorted with one of the most defiant and provocative speeches he ever made." At a meeting in Galway after the "proclamation," he gave the Chief Secretary, Mr. W. E. Forster, for advocating the use of buckshot by the police against unlawful assemblies, the name of

“Buckshot Forster,” a sobriquet that stuck to that gentleman until his death.

Certain other more conciliatory measures passed in 1881, and the retirement in 1882 of Mr. Forster, who was most unpopular with the Land League party, seemed about to bring peace to the nation which had been in a most distracted state, when, on May 6th, 1882, occurred a crime that shocked everybody and gave the enemies of the Irish people an excuse for further abuse and arguments against any attempt at ameliorating their lot.

The new Chief Secretary, Lord Frederick Cavendish, “who was expected to carry out the most benevolent of policies,” had only just arrived in Dublin from England. He was met by Mr. T. H. Burke, the Under-Secretary, and the two were walking in broad daylight through the Phoenix Park towards the Viceregal Lodge, when they were suddenly set upon by a gang of assassins, members of an extremist secret society called the “Invincibles.” Mr. Forster’s life had been constantly threatened, and Mr. Burke also had been marked out as a victim.

Mr. Burke was fatally stabbed by the murderers, and Lord Frederick, gallantly turning on the assailants with his umbrella, was likewise stabbed to death, the gang then making their escape on a jaunting-car waiting close by. The dreadful tragedy was actually seen by Earl Spencer, the Viceroy, from the windows of the Viceregal Lodge, but it was believed to be only some men indulging in horse-play.

It caused a tremendous outcry, naturally, but Mr. Parnell’s public expression of abhorrence of the deed



was received with contempt by certain of the English people who did not hesitate to hint that he was privy to it, or at least had incited it. "A savage cry for revenge went up from the whole British Empire and reprisals were immediately entered on," according to "The Story of Ireland" (brought up to recent times). A stringent "Coercion Act" was passed by the Government, and the country was practically "dragooned."

"The Invincibles," as it was subsequently discovered, were only two dozen extremists who thought, like the Nihilists of Russia, to strike terror into the hearts of English politicians by the assassination of prominent public men. In due course they were all brought to book, and five of them were hanged, while more were condemned to various terms of imprisonment. They were convicted mainly on the testimony of one James Carey, who was, as a matter of fact, one of the worst of the gang, indeed, to all intents and purposes, its leading spirit, and had indicated Mr. Burke to Brady, one of the murderers.

Carey was sent secretly to Cape Colony afterwards, but as he was on the point of going ashore at Port Elizabeth, he was shot dead by an Irishman named Patrick O'Donnell, in reward for his treachery.

An extremist section of Irish-Americans also considered that terrorism was the best way of converting the English people, and sent agents over to England to blow up public buildings, etc., with dynamite. Rightly or wrongly, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, one of Stephen's first lieutenants, and who had suffered severe imprisonment for his share in the Fenian conspiracy, was accused of fostering this violent policy in the States. Certain

it is that a few, but by no means anything like the great bulk, of the old Fenians were at the bottom of it. Their idea was to carry the war into the enemy's country, into England itself, and there prosecute it with every engine or weapon of destruction that the advance of science put at their disposal. It is plain though that they sought to avoid the loss of human life.

In March, 1883, the first of the explosions occurred at the Local Government Board Offices, Westminster, when the damage done to property was considerable, but no lives were lost. Then several explosions occurred on the Metropolitan and District railway. In 1884, infernal machines were found at several railway stations, and an explosion occurred at the Detective Office at Old Scotland Yard, when some twenty people were injured. Then the southern end of London Bridge was partially destroyed by an explosion, and, as regards this one, it is supposed that "Captain Mackey," the Rob Roy of the Fenian Rising, and two others who caused it, were blown to atoms, with the boat in which they were under the bridge. At the House of Commons the following year there were three explosions, and two constables were severely injured and had to be invalided. Some of these outrages were never brought home to anyone, but several men were arrested in various parts of the country and sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment.

This most reprehensible violence on the part of certain Irishmen greatly hampered the progress of Mr. Parnell and the Irish Parliamentary party.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

## PARNELL'S DRAMATIC TRIUMPH AND FALL.

The great Liberal party of England now changed its policy towards Ireland. Mr. Gladstone, its renowned leader, dropped Coercion and introduced a HOME RULE BILL—"to make better provision for the future government of Ireland"—on the 8th of April, 1886. The House was crammed.

"Hurrah for the brave old Irish race,  
That fire or sword could not efface;  
That lives and thrives and grows apace,  
However its foes assail it!  
That point by point, and day by day,  
Wins back its rights, and works its way,  
And BURSTS ITS BONDS!—Hurray! Hurray!  
With a hundred cheers we'll hail it.

Previous to the introduction of this Bill, Mr. Parnell and the other Irish Members of Parliament were continually being arrested, and lodged in Kilmainham Gaol. From there, in 1882, they issued a famous "No Rent Manifesto," advising the tenant-farmers of Ireland "to pay no rent to the landlords until the Government relinquished their system of terrorism and restored the constitutional rights of the people." It was a matter of surprise for long how this "No Rent

Manifesto " got out of the gaol. The bishops and priests, however, disapproved of the manifesto.

The Land League was suppressed, when a Ladies' Land League was formed by Miss Fanny Parnell, Parnell's sister, and as Parnell had predicted, his place was taken by " Captain Moonlight." Landlords, their agents, and others were shot at in various places.

The newspaper *United Ireland*, edited by Mr. William O'Brien, was " proclaimed " treasonable, and suppressed in Dublin, when its publishers transferred it to England and continued to produce it in Liverpool, " until it was again stopped and confiscated."

But now the awful outrages that had so lately disgraced the country were no more. All Ireland seemed willing to accept the hand of friendship, now at last held out by the English democracy in the person of William Ewart Gladstone. That great statesman's Home Rule Bill proposed to establish a separate 'Parliament for Ireland with limited powers.

Briefly, it proposed to establish a legislative body sitting in Dublin, consisting of two orders, the Upper of 28 representative peers and 75 members elected for ten years, and the Lower of the present 103 Irish members, with an additional 101, making therefore 204 members, elected for five years. There was to be a Lord Lieutenant as hitherto, but he was to be independent of Great Britain and only responsible to the Crown, and his executive or privy council were to be equally independent. The new body was to be empowered to enact laws and to impose and collect taxes, except the customs, but not to interfere with the army or navy or foreign and colonial affairs, nor was it to have the power of



enacting any religious endowment. All the then existing legal and police arrangements were to remain temporarily subject to the Crown. No Irish members were to sit at Westminster. Either order was to possess a temporary veto and both were to meet in the one house for debate.

For three hours and a half Mr. Gladstone unfolded his plan in the Commons, being "greeted with enthusiastic cheers from the Liberal and Irish benches."

"His exquisite voice, flexible in the highest degree, rose in declamation or sank in appeal, as he denounced the infamy of the Act of Union, or pleaded for justice and fair-play for a long-tried and sorely oppressed land." (D'Alton.)

The Conservative party opposed the measure, raising the cry that "Home Rule meant Rome Rule," and a number of the Liberals themselves seceded from Gladstone, eventually calling themselves Liberal-Unionists—the chief man amongst these was Mr. Joseph Chamberlain—and voted against the Bill, which was defeated in that same year by a majority of thirty in the Commons.

Mr. Gladstone and the ministry thereupon resigned and went to the country, when the Conservatives were returned to power.

The "Land War" was resumed with all the old bitterness and fierceness. On the suppression of the Land League, the "Irish National League" had been formed. The chief planks in its programme were Home Rule, peasant proprietary and local self-government. Parnell proposed a Land Bill to the effect "that the proceedings for the recovery of rent be suspended on payment of half the rent and arrears." There were

evictions for rent taking place all over Ireland, the people being turned out as before by the roadside from their homesteads for either inability or refusal to pay the rent.

The Bill was rejected, whereupon Mr. William O'Brien brought forward his famous "Plan of Campaign." Its scheme was, briefly, that the tenant should offer a fair rent, and, should the landlord refuse to accept it, should bank the money with a committee specially elected, and "fight" the landlord with the money thus lodged; the funds were to be supplemented by grants from the National League funds, and evicted tenants were to be supported.

Conflicts innumerable ensued between the police and the people at the evictions that followed, and on this account, even "Mr. Gladstone attacked both police and Government with vigour." Mr. Arthur Balfour, the Conservative Chief Secretary, came in for as much odium as "Buckshot Forster." Newspapers were again suppressed; more Coercion Acts followed, and Messrs. John Dillon, William O'Brien and T. D. Sullivan were put in gaol, while a Mr. John Mandeville died in prison. O'Brien refused to wear prison clothes, and so was stripped and left without any in his cell, when—lo and behold! next morning, on the gaoler entering, *he was seen to be wearing a brand-new suit of Blarney tweed!*

Immense were the amusement and delight of the Irish people and the chagrin of the Conservative Government. It was a mystery how O'Brien obtained the clothes, but it is supposed that a friendly warder went into his cell wearing two suits.

While in prison Mr. O'Brien wrote his famous novel,

“When we were Boys,” a stirring tale of the Fenian period.

The *London Times* newspaper now published a series of articles under the title of “Parnellism and Crime,” apparently to show Mr. Parnell’s connection with agrarian and political outrages committed in Ireland. What purported to be a facsimile of a letter written by Mr. Parnell in reference to the Phoenix Park murders was printed. This letter asserted that Mr. Burke got no more than his deserts, and that “to denounce the murders was the only course open to him (Mr. Parnell) and his colleagues in Parliament, and to do so promptly was plainly their best policy.”

Mr. Parnell at once declared the letter to be a forgery, but did not take immediate action against the *Times* whereupon his enemies proclaimed him afraid to do so. But Parnell never hurried himself; he bided his time and then struck—when it suited him best. He demanded that a Parliamentary Committee of the House of Commons should investigate the matter of the forgeries. The Government eventually established a Special Commission, consisting of three judges, to deal with the matter.

The now famous “Parnell Commission” opened its sitting in September, 1888, and the chief advocate of the Irish members was one who later became the Lord Chief Justice, a patriotic Irishman himself, Sir Charles Russell. His “admirable management of the case for his clients wonderfully increased his already brilliant reputation” (Denvir). The letters had been obtained from one Richard Pigott, who was shown now to be a “discredited Irish journalist,” living by blackmail,

“and as a begging-letter impostor.” He was subjected to a merciless cross-examination in the witness-box by Sir Charles Russell, who asked him to write certain words on a sheet of paper, “livelihood,” “likelihood,” and finally “hesitancy, with a small ‘h.’” Pigott spelled the last word, which was really the trap-word, “hesitency.” The “small h” suggestion was merely a ruse to throw Pigott off his guard.

“Have you noticed,” asked Sir Charles, “that the writer of the body of the letter of the 8th January, 1882,”—one of the forgeries—“spells it in the same way?”

The wretched forger, for such he was, almost in a state of collapse, replied, “that having that in my mind, I got into the habit of spelling it wrong.”

Sir Charles then caused begging letters that Pigott had sent to Mr. Forster, when Chief Secretary for Ireland, to be read in court, exposing the witness’s past terribly. It was pretty plain that Pigott had himself forged the letters attributed to Mr. Parnell, and it is a matter for surprise that Sir Charles did not make an application for the witness’s safe custody. On the following day, a Saturday, Pigott went uninvited to Mr. Henry Labouchere, a famous Radical M.P., and the proprietor of *Truth* and to him and his literary friend, George Augustus Sala, he confessed to having forged the letters. He explained that he had used genuine letters of Mr. Parnell and a Mr. Egan so as to get the general character of the handwriting, tracing some of the words and phrases against a window.

When the Commission re-opened on the Tuesday, February 26th, 1889, Pigott was not to be found. He



had fled the country. Sir Charles Russell then dramatically proclaimed, "We deliberately charge that behind Pigott and Houston"—the secretary of the Irish Loyal and Patriotic Union, who had obtained the letters from Pigott and supplied them to the *Times*—"there has been a foul conspiracy."

Mr. Parnell obtained £5,000 damages from the *Times*.

Pigott was ultimately traced to Madrid, where he passed under the name of "Roland Ponsonby." A police officer called on him, and Pigott, opening a hand-bag, took out a revolver and shot himself through the head.

But this triumph of Parnell's was counterbalanced in 1890, by his failure to defend himself in a divorce action brought by Captain O'Shea. It was believed at first that he was innocent of the charge preferred against him in this matter also, but his refusal to answer to it proved otherwise.

In grief and consternation, the Irish Parliamentary party, supported by the Irish Catholic prelates, decided, by a majority, that he could no longer lead them, and deposed him. A prominent author and journalist, Mr. Justin McCarthy, was elected in his place, and thus the party became divided into those who were against and for Parnell, the latter being known as "Parnellites" and the former as Anti-Parnellites or McCarthyites.

The long debates on the matter were held in Committee Room No. 15, which room has consequently become famous among Irishmen throughout the world. Parnell himself refused to retire from public life or abide by the decision of the majority. The Anti-Parnellites or

McCarthyites numbered 45, or in all counting 5 delegates in America, 50 ; those who still stood by the old leader were 30 in number. Against Parnell were arrayed Healy, Sexton, Dillon, Dr. Tanner, William O'Brien, T. P. O'Connor, T. D. Sullivan, etc. ; and to him still clung John Edward Redmond, and Wm. H. K. Redmond, Clancy, Harrington, Leamy, O'Kelly, P. O'Brien, and others of less note.

Parnell and his followers opposed the McCarthyites at the elections, and bitter and lamentable was now the recrimination that went on between the two opposing factions. Everywhere Irishmen were divided, for or against the old Chief. In the main, Ireland decided against him and his party, but " all Dublin was with him," and " attended by a boisterous mob," he broke into the offices of *United Ireland*, the revived Nationalist organ, and turned it into a Parnellite one. The *Freeman's Journal* also supported him. But he descended to abuse unworthy of his great past, and the *Freeman's Journal* turned against him, while a Nationalist organ was established, known as the *National Press*. Parnell then established the *Irish Daily Independent*. He married Mrs. O'Shea, the woman concerned in his fall, in June ; but in the same year " under the strain of disappointment and excitement, and travelling in all sorts of weather, his health began to fail. It had not been of the best for some years previously. At the end of September, 1891, cold and exposure brought on an attack of rheumatism and he died suddenly on the 7th of October at Brighton." His old and first colleague, Joseph Gillis Biggar, of " Obstruction " fame, had died in the previous year.

All Ireland now, forgetting the bitter factionism of the last few months, mourned Parnell as one of the greatest of her sons within recent times. He had certainly been, at the height of his career, her "uncrowned king." His funeral at Glasnevin on the following Sunday was an evidence of this, being attended by an enormous crowd—something like 200,000.

"The end of Parnell was a tragedy," writes the Rev. Dr. D'Alton, "with scarce a parallel in Irish history, so many of the pages of which are blotted by tears. Dying one year earlier, the whole Irish race would have wept at his open grave. But the events of the last year had alienated from him the affections of millions. . . . With his own hands he had deliberately pulled down the pillars of the temple he had reared. Yet, with all his faults, he looms large among the greatest of Ireland's sons. . . . In patience and foresight, in tenacity of purpose and strength of will, we must, to find his equal, go back to Hugh O'Neill or Brian Boru. . . . Not yet, less than a quarter of a century after his death, can full justice be done to him. . . . But . . . when brighter and better days come . . . Irishmen will then think of the man who struck such vigorous blows on their behalf."

This is a noble tribute to Parnell's memory, but who will say that it is undeserved or too fulsome?

O'Connor Morris, a rather hostile critic, writes of him in "Ireland from 1798 to 1898": "He was a natural ruler of men; in sheer force of character he towered, not only over the submissive band which crawled at his feet, but over the English politicians he outwitted and deceived . . . . That he did



his country good may be, perhaps, admitted." This is grudging praise, but nevertheless it is praise, and, coming from a political opponent and a County Court Judge, speaks volumes for Parnell.



## CHAPTER XXXVI.

## IN SIGHT OF HOME RULE.

James Stephens, the Fenian Head Centre, who had been suffered to return to his native land in his old age, paid his homage to the dead Chief by visiting the grave and placing a wreath upon it.

The Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites remained opposed to one another for eight years after his death. John E. Redmond, his able lieutenant, took up the mantle of the dead Chief and became leader of his party. In the following year, Mr. Gladstone and the Liberals, who had been in opposition since 1886, were returned to power. The "Grand Old Man," as Gladstone was affectionately called by his friends and supporters, introduced a SECOND HOME RULE BILL. It passed through the Commons by a majority of 34, but the Upper House threw it out.

It differed somewhat from the Bill of 1886. Instead of two orders sitting together, there were to have been a Legislative Council of 48 members, elected by those rated at £20 or upwards, and a Legislative Assembly of 103 members, elected by existing voters, the two Houses to sit separately. The Council was to be elected for eight years, the Assembly for five. The Viceroy would be non-political and appointed for six years,

with powers to assent to Bills or exercise a veto, subject to consultation with the Irish Cabinet. Ireland was to send 80 members to represent her at Westminster in the Imperial Parliament. In all purely Irish matters the Irish Parliament would be supreme, but it might not endow or restrict any religious belief.

Gladstone "was not in a position to fight the Lords on the question." He had long been threatened with cataract in both his eyes, and, in 1894, the venerable statesman retired from public life. He died on May 9th, 1898, to the sorrow even of many of his political enemies, one of the greatest and noblest men England ever produced, and one whom Irishmen will ever revere and think of kindly.

Lord Rosebery succeeded Gladstone as Prime Minister, but he was no friend of Home Rule, and now dissension appeared even in the ranks of the Anti-Parnellites themselves. Mr. Sexton threatened to resign, and Mr. Dillon and Mr. Healy quarrelled.

The Conservatives came into power in 1895. Lord Salisbury was Premier in the Lords, with Mr. Arthur Balfour Leader of the Commons, and Joseph Chamberlain as Colonial Secretary. Home Rule was, therefore, once again "in the dust." The squabbling went on in the Irish Parliamentary ranks and, in 1896, Justin McCarthy resigned from the chairmanship of his party. Sexton refused the vacant chair and so John Dillon was elected. A "National Convention" was summoned in Dublin, September, 1896, and was attended by 2,500 delegates from all parts of the Irish world. The Redmondites, as the old Parnellites were now called, and the Healyites, did not attend. Dr. O'Donnell,

Bishop of Raphoe, presided. But the attempt to restore unity and unanimity in the Irish Party was a failure. In 1898 Mr. William O'Brien started the United Irish League, and this organisation absorbed the old National League, and "spoke out for harmony among the leaders."

Sir Horace Plunkett, a Protestant and Unionist landlord of broad mind and generous views, now won for Ireland an "Act for establishing a Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, and for other purposes connected therewith." John Dillon suggested a conference of Parnellites and Anti-Parnellites, and offered to resign the chair and serve under a Parnellite chairman, "a noble act of self-effacement and patriotism." It was not, however, until 1899 that the "split" was healed by a rapprochement between the two parties, when Mr. John Redmond, the Parnellite leader, became Chairman, by common consent, of the reunited Irish party. He has led it ever since with conspicuous ability, and is regarded to-day in much the same light as Parnell at the zenith of his power.

The Boer War broke out, and was followed by the death of Queen Victoria. On March 29th, 1901, the aged Fenian Chief, James Stephens, died, at Blackrock. He was given a grand public funeral, vast crowds lining the streets as the six-horsed hearse, laden with wreaths, passed to Glasnevin.

In 1902 "Colonel" Lynch, who commanded an Irish Brigade in the Boer service against the British army, was elected M.P. for Galway city. He was arrested on a charge of high treason in the same year. Tried at the King's Bench, he was sentenced to death on the 23rd

January, 1903. The sentence was afterwards commuted to penal servitude for life, but he was released "on licence" after the lapse of a year, and in 1907 he received a free pardon.

In order to finish the Boer War, the Conservatives had been returned to power at the General Election of 1900, and, in 1903, Mr. George Wyndham, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, carried a Land Purchase Bill through Parliament. Mr. Wyndham is a great-grandson of Lord Edward, the gallant Geraldine of '98.

His Bill "contemplated the total abolition of Irish landlordism and the final settlement of the Irish Land question, and for this purpose a sum of 100 million pounds was to be advanced by the State to enable the tenants to buy." Mr. John Redmond described it "as the greatest measure of land purchase reform ever seriously offered to the Irish people," and Mr. T. W. Russell, a former Unionist Irish M.P., supported it, as did John Dillon, Timothy Healy, and William O'Brien. In order to induce landlords to sell their land, 12 millions were to be given to them as a bonus. The Act became law, and, in the words of T. W. Russell, was "the greatest measure passed for Ireland since the Union." A great many purchases have been effected under the Act.

In 1906, however, at the General Election, the Conservatives were simply routed. Mr. Balfour, their leader, who had made himself almost as unpopular in Ireland as Forster of the earlier *régime*, suffering defeat in person at the polls. The new Premier, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, was a staunch Home Ruler, and he had in his cabinet men of the same decided



views on Ireland, John Morley, Lloyd-George, Birrell, Bryce, etc. Mr. Bryce became Chief Secretary, but only held the office for a session. Mr. Augustine Birrell, an author of high repute, succeeded him.

In 1907 Mr. Birrell brought in an Irish Councils Bill, which was to reform the system of Irish Government. An Irish Council was to be formed of 107 members—84 elected and 23 nominated—and take over the powers of National, Intermediate and Local Government Boards. Sir Anthony MacDonnell is accredited with its suggestion. The Bill was, however, dropped, as a National Convention in Dublin would not accept it. This Bill was practically the same as "Devolution," proposed by Lord Dunraven—that is, a modified form of Home Rule.

Michael Davitt, the Fenian, Land Leaguer, and M.P., died in 1906, greatly lamented by his party. In 1908 Mr. Birrell passed the Irish Universities Bill. This solved the problem of higher education in Ireland. Two new Universities were established—the National in Dublin, with the Queen's Colleges of Cork and Galway, and Belfast University. Various incomes of between twelve and thirty-two thousand pounds were given to the colleges, and the National University received £150,000 for buildings, and Belfast £60,000. There were to be no religious tests in either University, but the National University was to be governed in the main by Catholics, and Belfast by Presbyterians.

This measure gratified the Catholics of Ireland in no small degree, and was particularly well received by the Catholic hierarchy.

Throughout this year and the preceding one, a number

of persons were charged with "cattle-driving," the newest form of agrarian disorder; cattle of unpopular parties being driven miles away from home in the dead of night, sometimes by large, organised mobs of men, and then abandoned. A serious conflict occurred between the police and the people at Ennistymon, County Clare; and, in County Sligo, there was a desperate affray, in which one of the cattle-drivers was shot dead and several of the police injured.

About this time, too, a new party began to make itself heard, the Sinn Fein party. The words are Irish for "ourselves." The "Sinn Feiners" would have the Irish Parliamentary Party abstain from going to Westminster, and proposed the discouragement of the use of articles of English manufacture and the boycotting generally of everything English; Irish history alone should be studied, and the Irish language, sports, etc., revived, and Irish goods exclusively supported. They went farther; they would taboo the Irish Parliamentary Party for recognising English legislature. In 1907, "they were a source of uneasiness and alarm to the Irish Party." But milder views prevailed.

Previous to this, some years earlier, the "Gaelic League" had been founded, in 1893 to be exact, "for the purpose of reviving the Irish language, promoting the study of Irish literature, and supporting Irish industries," and awakened great enthusiasm and support. Gaelic studies were promoted everywhere, and a chair for the Irish language was suggested for the new Catholic University.

Trouble now again broke out in the Irish Parliamentary ranks. William O'Brien and Timothy Healy

differed with the others and more or less separated from them, with a small following, and, in 1910, at Cork, for which constituency O'Brien was a member, the "All for Ireland" League was formed in partial opposition to the United Irish League.

Mr. Birrell removed some of the causes of the cattle-driving and recent boycotting by introducing a Land Act in 1909, by which provision for future purchases could be raised by the issue of 3 per cent. stock. In making advances, the treasury were to issue such stock, *vice* cash; the congested districts board was reconstituted, its income increased, and the area of its work extended; while compulsory powers of purchase were given to estate commissioners, as well as to the congested districts board. This allayed the agrarian disorders. In the following year the new King, George V., was proclaimed at Dublin Castle in the Privy Council Chamber, and by the Ulster King of Arms at various public places in the city, and later in Cork, Belfast and other cities. The O'Brienite and Nationalist factions came in collision in County Cork, and a serious riot took place, when the police fired over the heads of the crowd, accidentally shooting a man named Regan, who afterwards died. A Mr. E. O'Sullivan, M.P., who had been elected for East Kerry, was unseated by a decision of the courts declaring that his agents had been guilty of intimidation and undue influence.

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

## HOME RULE ON THE CARPET.

The Liberal Government's Finance Bill and Budget having been rejected by the House of Lords, the Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith, went to the country on the question of whether the Lords or the Commons should rule; he proposed limiting the veto of the Upper Chamber. To carry out this proposal, he was triumphantly returned to power at the General Election, and he then brought in his Veto Bill, which greatly curtailed the veto, or power of the Lords to throw out any measure repugnant to them. Their right to interfere at all with a Money Bill had been previously questioned, and it was now decided that, if they rejected a measure passed by the Commons, it was to be referred back to the Commons, and if these again passed it, it was to go to the Sovereign for approval, and, on receiving that, pass into law as if agreed to by the Second House.

The passing of the Veto Bill was received with acclamation in Ireland, for the House of Lords had always been the uncompromising foes of the popular claims there. With his road thus cleared, Mr. Asquith brought forward his long-looked-for Home Rule Bill, the **THIRD HOME RULE BILL**. He introduced it in the House, on behalf of the Government, on the 11th of



April, 1912, and it was "received with satisfaction throughout the United Kingdom," saving as regards the Unionist section of the community. The Irish National Convention, representing not only Nationalist organisations, but also local government authorities in Ireland, accepted the Bill with enthusiastic unanimity.

By this Bill, as Mr. Asquith said, "the supremacy, absolute and sovereign, of the Imperial Parliament, is maintained unimpaired and beyond the reach of challenge or of question"; and Mr. John Redmond, the Irish Leader, declared, "We want peace with this country (England). We deny that we are separatists, and we say we are willing . . . to accept a subordinate Parliament created by Statute of this Imperial Legislature as a final settlement of Ireland's claims."

The following was the original draft of the Bill, but in one or two minor instances the clauses were slightly altered during debate in the House :

The Irish Parliament is to consist of His Majesty the King, and two Houses, namely, the Irish Senate and the Irish House of Commons. The Commons shall consist of 164 members returned by the constituencies in the ordinary way. The Senate shall consist of 40 members. They will at first be named by the Lord Lieutenant as the mouthpiece of the King, who, of course, will be guided by his Ministers in making the selections. By lots it will then be decided which of the senators shall retire in two years' time, in four, six and eight, ten of them retiring thus every two years, when they will be elected by the Irish people, of course. A man may be elected to either the Senate or the Commons,

but he may not be a member of both Houses at the same time. He may speak in either or both, but he can only vote in that House to which he belongs. The Senate may not veto Money Bills, and such may only be started in the Commons. When the two Houses differ, they are to meet jointly, when they will vote together, and the vote of the majority of the two combined Houses, thus met together, will decide the matter.

An Irish Cabinet or Government, of course, will be necessary, and the leader of the majority in the two Houses will form the Ministry, for appointment by the Lord Lieutenant. The Executive Departments or Offices will be very similar to those of the Imperial Parliament, save, of course, there will be no Lord of the Admiralty, or offices of that nature. At first the Royal Irish Constabulary will be controlled by the Imperial Parliament, but after six years the Irish Parliament "will, without any further discussion, take over charge of that force."

The Irish Parliament will have power to do everything in reason that is coincident with the unity and welfare of the great British empire. What it may not do is "pass laws relating to the making of peace, or war, or matters arising from a state of war, or dealing with the Crown, the Navy, Army, foreign affairs, lighthouses, coinage, etc., or alter the election laws or any provision of the Home Rule Act itself. "Any law made by the Irish Parliament in defiance of these restrictions is to be void."

A sum of £500,000 will be given by the Imperial Parliament to the Irish Government for three years, after that the sum will be reduced by £50,000 annually for

six years, until it reaches £200,000, at which figure it will remain until Ireland can pay her own way. Until then all the taxes levied in Ireland are to be paid into the Imperial Exchequer. The Irish Parliament will have power to increase, or reduce or omit to levy any Imperial tax, and may impose any tax, not substantially the same as the Imperial tax. Imports may not be taxed, different to those which the Imperial Parliament taxes. "No preference, privilege, or advantage is to be given on account of religious belief, and no disability or advantage is to be imposed because of it." The Irish Parliament may not make any religious ceremony or belief a condition of the lawfulness of any marriage. And so "there is no danger of the Catholic Church being established by law in that country . . . . Thus . . . . the rights of Protestants and minorities will be protected."

The position of Irish Civil Servants will be substantially the same as before. A special Committee will be set up to watch over their interests. It will consist of three members, one appointed by the Treasury, one by the Executive, and one (the chairman) by the Lord Chief Justice of England. The Lord Lieutenant will alone have the power of removing civil servants from office.

Ireland will be represented in the Imperial Parliament by 42 members, instead of her present 103. No University will elect one of these members, as they will consist of 8 borough members and 34 county members. Belfast will have 4 of the 8 borough members, Dublin 3, and Cork 1. Of the 34 County members, Ulster will be represented by 11, Munster 9, Leinster 8, and Connaught 6.

Such is the great scheme of Mr. Asquith's Home Rule Bill. It passed the Third Reading in the Commons with the grand majority of 110, on January 16th, 1913, amid scenes of the greatest enthusiasm, cheers being given for Mr. Asquith, Mr. Redmond, and the late Mr. Parnell.

The House of Lords, as was expected, promptly threw out the Bill, but the Veto Act has effectually curtailed the autocratic power of the Upper House, and in due course, unless something very unforeseen happens, the Bill will become law and we shall see an Irish Parliament sitting again in Dublin as in Grattan's day.

Ireland will then be "A NATION ONCE AGAIN," and Thomas Davis's dream will have been realised.

With Ireland ruled by a Government of her own, Irish capital will, no doubt, flow in from all quarters of the globe to aid her sons at home to revive old industries and found new ones; her art, literature, sculpture and music will receive an impetus that has been long wanting, and she will again enjoy "national health." Emigration, as a natural consequence, must cease, and immigration begin; the population will increase, no longer decrease, and may speedily rise to and perhaps surpass that of the nine millions before 1848. As evidence of this we may point to Belfast, which owes its prosperity and large population at the present day solely to the great encouragement that has been given in every way to its industries: hitherto the rest of Ireland has been starved in this respect.

Of course we must not expect any sudden or great change in the condition of things; Rome was not



built in a day ; and what we prophesy will, to a great extent, be a matter of time. But, with the dawn of a better understanding between the English and Irish peoples, the engenderment of a kindlier spirit, much should undoubtedly be looked for. Britannia and Erin will clasp hands over the dead ashes of old animosities, and march forward side by side—linked in sisterly love at last—to their joint destiny in the history of the world.

THE END.

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